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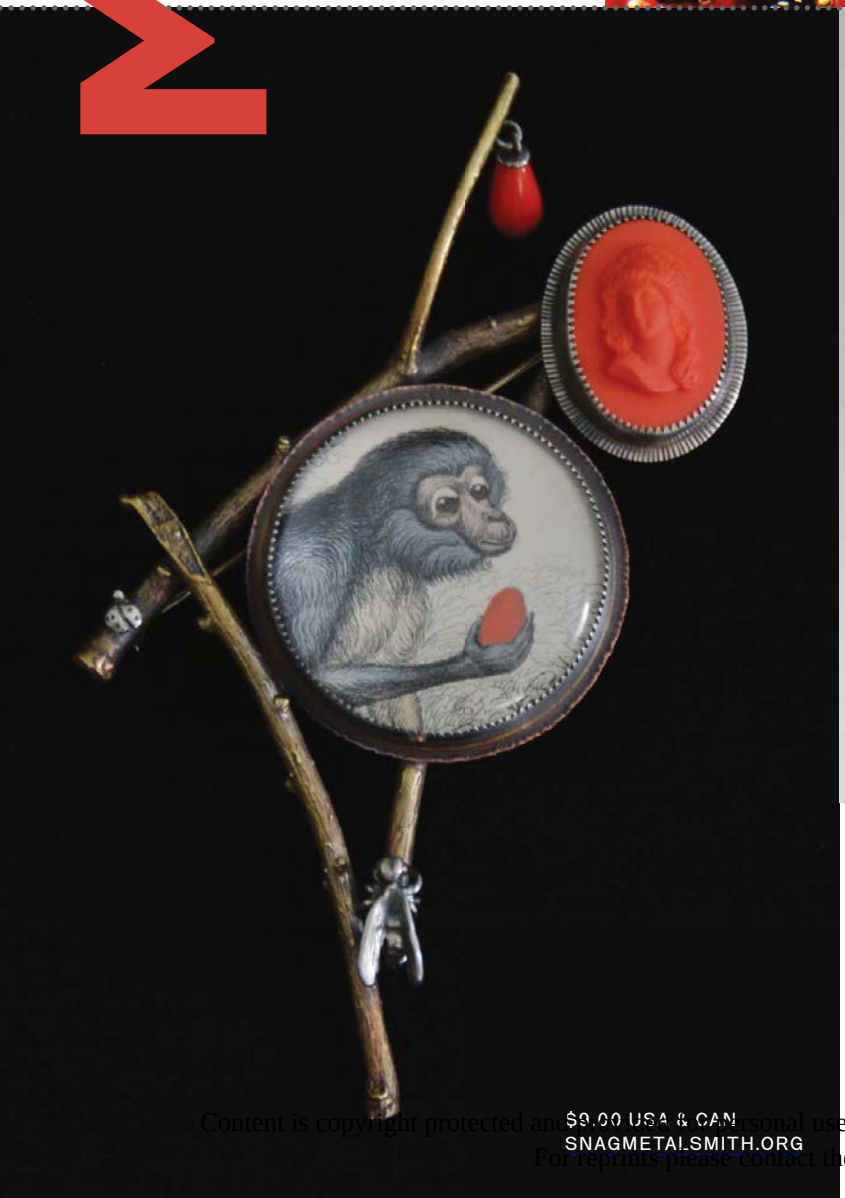

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We've all heard the familiar adage about the journey being more important than the destination. When applied to art making, it translates into a matter of means and ends: *how* does one creatively arrive at the final crafted object? As such, this issue of *Metalsmith* is something of an artistic travelogue, charting paths taken en route to satisfying form.

As hinted in the title of our lead article, "The Metamorphosis of Barbara Paganin," the journey of this Italian jeweler has not been straight and narrow. Indeed, Paganin's work has swerved to encompass a number of sources and subjects. "I ingest images, sensations, emotions, and then I give back jewelry," she states. Her guiding compass throughout has been her personal life's narrative, which underwrites her elaborate and evocative works.

Although Paganin's route was sinuous, it remained singular. Not so for the creative pairs featured in "Double Vision: Collaborations in Metal." As with a road trip on which the passenger may question the driver's course, the plot thickens when two makers are both steering. In fact, as author Judy Wagonfeld tells it, collaborations may reverse the notion of the journey being primary. She writes, "In a pair, the mandatory 'hand of the artist' takes a back seat to joint effort... Who designed it or carried more material makes no difference. The outcome counts."

Of course, no artist is ever truly alone on their creative journey; they are joined by teachers and predecessors every step of the way. If even just a memory, these fellow travelers can hinder or help on one's path. Japan's Living National Treasure, Ōsumi Yukie, is accompanied by generations of forbearers as she practices traditional metalsmithing techniques. According to writer Toni Greenbaum, Yukie's commitment to keeping the past alive has led her to take small but bold steps forward to expand the ancient repertoire.

Just as we say that the journey's importance surpasses that of the goal, we could also claim that without a goal there would not even *be* a journey. So on the question of means and ends, in the end it all depends on what it means.—***Suzanne Ramljak, Editor***

The mission of *Metalsmith* magazine is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in jewelry and metalsmithing. In fulfillment of the goal of producing a significant document of the field, editorial content will emphasize contemporary activities and ideas, with supportive content to include relevant historical work and critical issues.

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Peter Schmid *"Nectar" cuff bracelet*, 2016, 24 kt. gold on oxidized sterling, set with three large hexagonal green beryl, yellow beryl and blue beryl (aquamarine) gems, accented with diamonds; 2½" x 3¼" x ½"; Photo: Aaron Faber Gallery.

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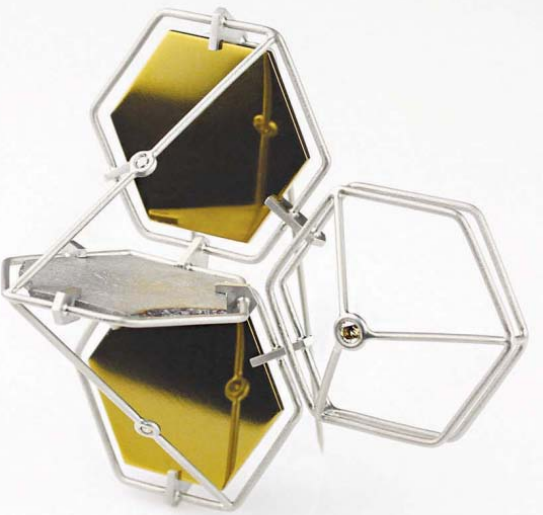

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Left to right: Deborah Falls, Robert Farrell, Cliff Lee, Rebecca Hungerford

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Keynote Speaker

Ivy Ross

SNAG's Keynote Speaker, Ivy Ross, is currently the Vice President of Design and UX for the Hardware Product Area at Google. Previously, she was VP of Project Aura (Glass & Beyond) at Google and has held executive positions with several companies, including Calvin Klein, Swatch, Coach, Mattel, Bausch & Lomb, and Gap.

A renowned artist, her innovative metal work in jewelry is in the permanent collections of 12 international museums. A winner of the prestigious National Endowment for the Arts grant, Ivy has also received the Women in Design Award and Diamond International Award for her creative designs.

For a full line up of speakers and conference events, please visit the conference webpage: www.snagmetalsmith.org/conferences/nexus/

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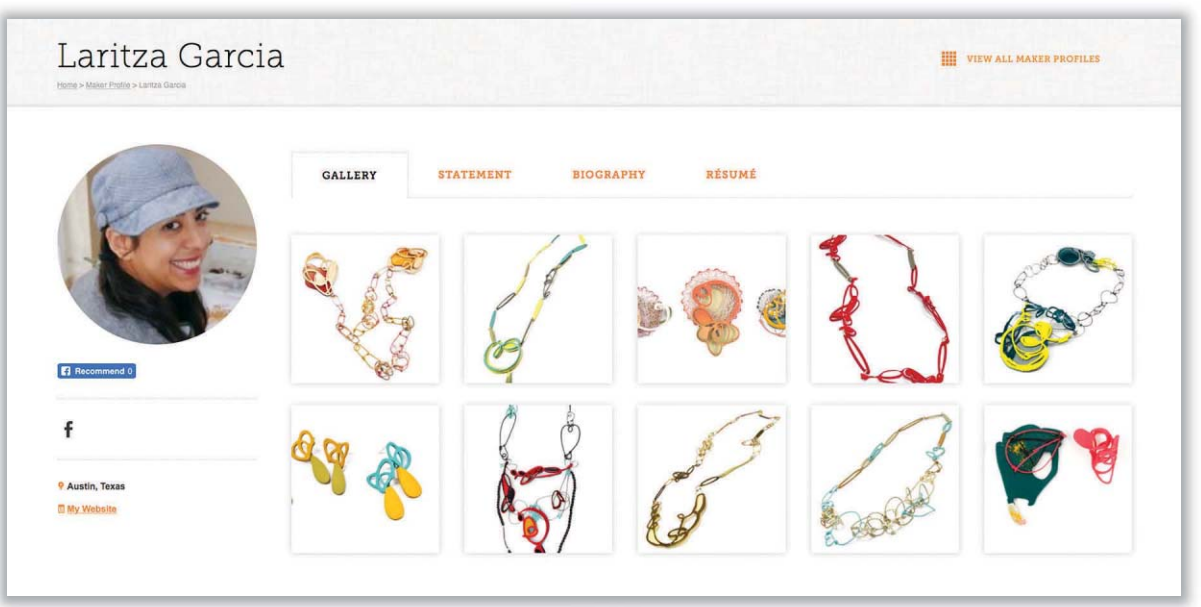

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NEW & NOTABLE

BY KATE FOGARTY

"Style Alert" posted on Twitter featuring bracelet Ivanka Trump wore on "60 Minutes" after the election.

ACCESSORIES BY TRUMP

By now we know what sort of fashion statement to expect from President Trump (Brioni suit, red tie, hairspray). First Lady Melania and first daughter Ivanka have kept it relatively simple as well: monochrome designer dresses, flowing hair, and impossibly dewy skin. But did you know that Melania and Ivanka both have signature jewelry lines? Well, *had*, in Melania's case. Her Melania Timepieces & Jewelry line debuted in 2010 on QVC, and sold out in 45 minutes. (Donald was her first caller.) But at this date it seems the line is no longer available, perhaps because the product was made in China. However, one can find the costume rings and bracelets on eBay.

Ivanka Trump's fine jewelry line, however, is alive and well. The 18-karat-gold and diamond collection launched in 2007, with the opening of a boutique on New York's Madison Avenue, and it is sold in boutiques and department stores around the world. Her website says that the line "is designed for the modern woman who leads with strength and transitions fluidly between her many personal and professional roles," and the prices range in the thousands.

Eyebrows were raised, however, when hours after Ivanka's November appearance on "60 Minutes," her jewelry company sent out a "style alert" on Twitter promoting the bracelet she wore: her "favorite bangle," which costs up to $10,800. The company quickly deflected the bad press with a statement: "This notification was sent by a well-intentioned marketing employee at one of our companies who was following customary protocol, and who, like many of us, is still making adjustments post-election," said Abigail Klem, president of the Ivanka Trump brand.

While it's not unusual for a first lady to champion a fashion brand (Michelle Obama actively promoted both the young and established designers who dressed her over her eight-year tenure), to use the spotlight to hock your own raised ethical issues. Ten days after the "60 Minutes" snafu, Ivanka issued a statement saying she was distancing herself from

Facebook posting by Melania Trump on July 25, 2011: "Here are some designs from my new 'Melania Timepieces® and Jewelry' collection. They will be available this Thursday on QVC and QVC.com!"

CNN coverage of Kellyanne Conway's promoting of Ivanka Trump's designs from the White House.

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Title sequence shots from "The Crown"

Actress Claire Foy in the role of Queen Elizabeth II, in the Netflix series "The Crown."

her brand, including separating her social media accounts from that of the company. However, when Nordstrom Inc. announced in February that they would stop carrying many of Ivanka's products, ostensibly because they were not selling well, the President criticized the retailer on Twitter on his personal and presidential accounts. And counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway was "counseled" by White House press secretary Sean Spicer shortly thereafter for urging viewers to "go buy Ivanka's stuff" on the television show "Fox & Friends." Indeed, the executive branch has a ban on staff endorsing products or companies. The Office of Government Ethics regulation also prohibits using public office for private gain of oneself or friends or relatives. Despite Nordstrom's decision, sales of Ivanka Trump merchandise jumped 21 percent in 2016, said a representative for the brand. And the collection will be available in 1,000 stores this year, up from more than 800; it's available at Zappos, Lord & Taylor, Bloomingdales, Macy's, Hudson Bay, and Dillard's.

Now what would *Metalsmith* suggest to liven up those ladylike, tasteful sheaths that the First Lady and Ivanka Trump are prone to wearing? Perhaps some signature pieces from America's best metalsmiths and artists. We'd be happy to suggest several, should they call.

METAL ON THE MONARCHY

One of the most mesmerizing 60 seconds on television today derives its power from the craft of metalsmithing. Against a black, smoky background and a moody score, hunks of raw gold slowly morph into the skeins of a molten, spidery web, ultimately coalescing into an intricate filigreed royal crown topped with jewels.

This haunting animation is the title sequence of the first season of "The Crown," and is not to be fast-forwarded through—even if you're binge-watching all ten episodes. A British series produced by Netflix, reportedly on a staggering budget of $100 million, "The Crown" tells the story of the young Queen Elizabeth II as you've never seen her: as a girl, in conference with Winston Churchill, in a complicated marriage with salty Prince Phillip, navigating family dramas, her travels to the colonies. It's been a hit for Netflix, and the second season will be released later this year.

The title sequence is the work of director Patrick Clair, of the Los Angeles production firm Elastic, and this is not his first show-stopping start: he created the formidable opening sequences for AMC's "The Night Manager" and HBO's "Westworld." In recent

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years the budgets and ambitions of television shows have grown to match that of films, and their title sequences have become cinematically provocative as well. In an interview with *The Guardian* newspaper in November 2016, Clair said, "Honestly, 'The Crown' was daunting because there was enough material when we came on board to see that the show was going to be something pretty exquisite," said Clair. "It was a matter of capturing something that could speak to the depth and complexity of the story but also being respectful."

With striking simplicity, the title sequence for "The Crown" manages to convey the majesty of the British monarchy, but suggests a dark side as well—in essence, deftly expressing the tone of the series itself. The final design was created in collaboration with German composer Hans Zimmer, himself a celebrated music producer and composer of more than 150 film scores.

"It was about looking so closely at the crown that you start to see the rough edges, the rough beginnings, the rich histories of all the various minerals and metals and jewels that have gone into it," Clair told *The Guardian*. "And ultimately a crown carries a very heavy symbolic weight for the person who wears it which can be very isolating and destructive. So I hope it also captures some of that darkness."

THE BIG SCREEN

Metalwork is integral to the physical expression of the long-awaited National Museum of African American History and Culture, which opened last fall on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup, an all-African-American architectural design team composed of Phil Freelon of Perkins + Will; London-based David Adjaye; and the late J. Max Bond Jr. of Davis Brody Bond of New York (with the locally experienced firm SmithGroup) won the competition to design the museum in 2003. The museum's architecture is inspired by an African design vocabulary, which stands in contrast to the classical lines and symmetry of the 18 existing museums on the Mall. Its "Corona" silhouette is a striking triple inverted pyramid form, each tier angled up and out, inspired by the crowns of the Yoruba, an African people with origins in Benin and Nigeria.

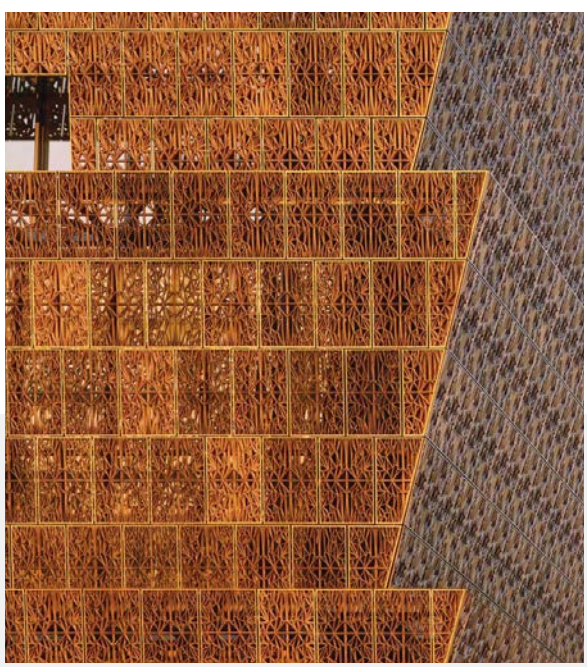
However, it is the metal screen in which the glass building is sheathed that presents its strongest statement: 3,600 panels of shimmering bronze filigree. Inspired in part by the intricate ironwork forged by the African-American craftsmen of New Orleans and Charleston, the panels create a latticework of light that shines through and settles onto the museum floors, changing throughout the day. Adjaye told National Public Radio he wanted to evoke the feeling of hot summer, with "sunlight dappling through the trees." "In a way, the building is almost analogous to a giant tree with an incredible shade," he says. "I wanted it to be a museum where when you come in, you weren't suddenly in an interior

The new National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington D.C.

Photo: Alan Karchmer/NMAAHC

Interior of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Photo: Alan Karchmer/NMAAHC



Detail of metal screen on NMAAHC exterior.

Photo: Alan Karchmer/NMAAHC

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that was about focusing on marble and stone and classical forms... but to come in and to have light be your guide." The panels are interspersed with angled cuts that allow select views of the monuments and the Mall, and are suspended from a steel framework.

The NMAAHC's original design proposed that the scrim be made of bronze, making this the only museum on the Mall whose exterior is not of limestone or marble. The "dark" exterior was not a thematic coincidence, Adjaye told NPR; it was part of the philosophy of Lonnie Bunch III, the museum's founding director. "He really embraced and really loved this idea of a dark presence on the Mall. In a way, the museum for him is about the way in which the African-American community is absolutely integral to understanding the American identity but somehow has been always in the back room."

Cost and feasibility issues forced the architects to change the panels to bronze-painted aluminum. But evoking the warmth of natural bronze, as well as ensuring an even finish and wear, proved a two-year challenge. The architects built a full-scale mockup of the facade in Troy, New York, to test it under all light and weather conditions. Paint, sprayable metal, electroless plating, anodized aluminum, and a nickel-chrome plating were all rejected by the Commission of Fine Arts or the architects for durability or thematic reasons. In 2014, a coating of polyvinyl difluoride (PVDF) was tested and approved. The scrim was fabricated by American Iron Works, Inc.

THE NEW FACE OF LIBERTY

With a January ceremony in the Department of the Treasury's historic Cash Room, the United States Mint kicked off a year-long celebration of its 225th anniversary. Unveiled at the ceremony were the designs for the 2017 American Liberty 225th Anniversary Gold Coin, which will be the first in a series of 24-karat gold coins that will portray Liberty with designs representing Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Indian-Americans, and other ethnicities. (The Mint's motto is "Connecting through Coins.") The "heads" design depicts a Liberty as an African-American woman wearing a crown of stars, with the inscriptions "LIBERTY," "1792," "2017," and "IN GOD WE TRUST." The "tails" design depicts an eagle in flight; inscriptions include "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA," "E PLURIBUS UNUM," "1OZ. .9999 FINE GOLD," and "100 DOLLARS."

The obverse ("heads" side) was designed by Mint Artistic Infusion Program (AIP) Designer Justin Kunz and sculpted by Mint Sculptor-Engraver Phebe Hemphill, while the reverse ("tails" side) was designed by AIP Designer Chris Costello and sculpted by Mint Sculptor-Engraver Michael Gaudioso. The 2017 coin will be available April 6, and will also be struck in .999 silver.

The new coin design has caused a bit of a tempest in a toy bank. *Coinweek* reported that their post on Facebook concerning the coin garnered more than 1,000 likes, and more than 50 people "loved" it—though more than 40 people signaled that they were "angry." However, after a brief investigation, they determined that "those 40+ individuals have vocalized their anger across multiple platforms—in the mainstream press and the coin press," said writer Charles Morgan on *Coinweek*'s website, suggesting that their resistance was more ideological than coin-specific. Morgan also argued that the U.S. Mint's mandate for "new and modern interpretations of Liberty" has been in place for some years; the coin was not the last-minute effort of an outgoing Presidential administration, as some conservative coin collectors and media outlets have suggested. But has the country outgrown the "Lady Liberty" icon? Perhaps, says Slate.com. "The U.S. Mint's insistence on representing freedom with a fictional 'lady' is anachronistic at best and troubling at worst, and commemorative coins aren't exactly the beating heart of popular culture," wrote L.V. Anderson; though she concluded, "Even so, the new Lady Liberty coin feels like an enormous symbolic step, somehow both urgent and long overdue."

The 2017 American Liberty 225th Anniversary Gold Coin.

Photo courtesy of the United States Mint.

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MARION CAGE McCOLLAM: DESIGNING WOMAN

BY ANDREA DINOTO

Elongated Shard Pulls
from the "Peak"
collection
bronze with satin finish
length 7 1/2"

TO CREATE HER gallery in her hometown of New Orleans, jeweler and architect Marion Cage McCollam bought and renovated a 150-year-old "side-hall shotgun" building on famed Magazine Street. "It was just very easy to do here," she says of both renovation and launch, "but unfathomable in New York." Marion Cage Studio, which opened in 2009, and is now self-supporting, features McCollam's varied jewelry lines and sculptural cabinet hardware, as well as a curated collection of nontraditional bridal jewelry by other designers. To balance this triple-threat business—check her out on Facebook and Instagram—McCollam, 51, deftly draws on a remarkable professional history that began in Paris, where in 1989 she earned a bachelor's degree in design from Ecole Superieure Des Arts Graphiques. Soon after, she joined a design team in the London office of the visionary Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid, who encouraged her to apply to architecture school. McCollam took Hadid's advice and in 1994 earned a master's degree in architecture from Columbia University, after which she returned to France to work on projects by Bernard Tschumi and other prestigious architects.

In 2000, back in the States, McCollam earned a second master's degree, in business administration, at the University of Houston. In her—um—spare time, while teaching architecture in that city and planning on an academic career, she began taking night classes "for fun," at the Glassell School of Art, the teaching arm of Houston's MFA. "I took a couple of semesters there," she says, "starting with basic fabrication, because I was always interested in making jewelry with wood. Architects have a love affair with wood." It was when she learned to solder and cast, says McCollam, "that I really got interested in jewelry," and she began making it seriously in 2003.

As McCollam's website states, she is never comfortable limiting herself to one scale or medium, and so has never stopped working in architecture. While designing retail interiors in New York, clients took note of her jewelry. One introduced her to Aurora Lopez, who presented her work in her SoHo gallery, at which point, says McCollam, jewelry "started taking up more time." Before opening her New Orleans gallery in 2009,

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Arabesque Cuff
sterling silver plated
in black rhodium
width 2"

she sold her jewelry exclusively wholesale; and while she continues to participate in trade shows, such as NYNOW, she sells as well through her website and a range of retailers, including the Guggenheim Museum store. "Retailers find you at shows and on Instagram," she says, emphasizing the importance of social media as a marketing tool, "especially for young artists." Her several distinctive "Marion Cage" lines include "Arabesque," which incorporates the fleur-de-lis motif, the symbol of New Orleans; the simplified organic forms of "Point and Swell"; and "Totem," which combines metals with sculpted wood.

"Sensual forms with an architectural edge" is how McCollam describes both last year's "SS2016" jewelry line, as well as her "Peak" collection of sculptural cabinetry hardware, named in honor of her late mentor Hadid's groundbreaking design for the Jockey Club Innovation Tower in Hong Kong. (Hadid, who achieved global fame and recognition before her untimely death in 2015, is known for sweeping cantilevered forms and uncanny geometries.). For her jewelry production McCollam relies heavily, she says, "on an army of contractors in New York City: casters, stonesetters, and people who do prepolishing." She also employs assistants for sales and jewelry assembly, as well as someone skilled in Rhinoceros, the 3D modeling program. "I rely on Rhino a lot and use a 3D printer for prototypes," she says, "but I prefer to have a caster print the final wax output." She produces two jewelry collections a year (fall/winter and spring/summer), working in gold, silver, and rhodium "because I like mixing colors—gold with black is very popular."

McCollam shows one hardware collection a year at ICFF (International Contemporary Furniture Fair), an annual Javits Center design event. "All my hardware is brass and bronze," she says, "or I can do a plated finish, such as white nickel. I sell directly to the trade." With the Marion Cage gallery now thriving, McCollam feels free to pick and choose architectural jobs while pursuing other design projects and enjoying her endlessly appealing city. "One of the nicest things about living here in New Orleans," she says, "is that everyone wants to come see you."

Andrea DiNoto is a New York–based writer on art, craft, and design.

Jeweler and architect Marion Cage McCollam (right) with client.

Furthermore: www.marioncage.com

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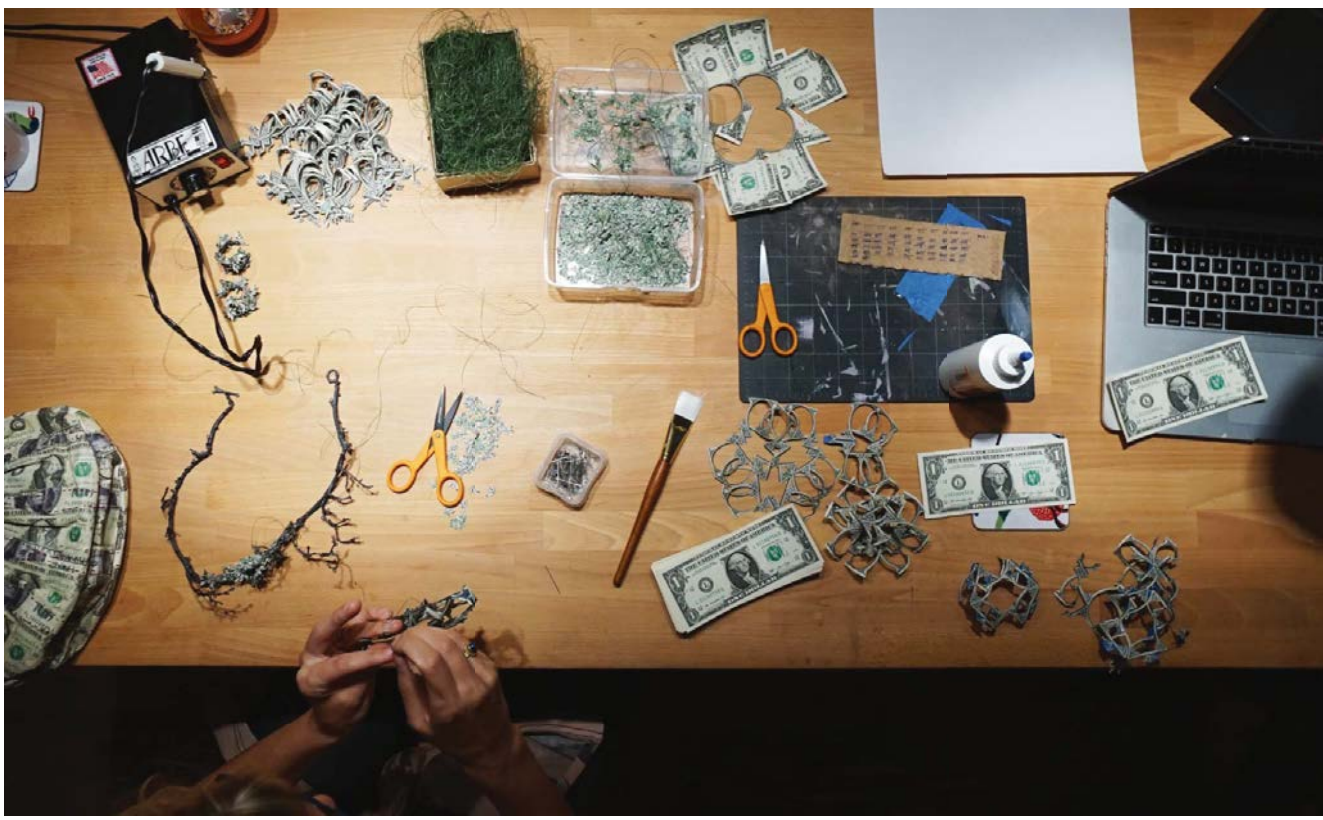
LAUREN TICKLE

BY MICHAEL MCMILLAN

Jeweler Lauren Tickle in her Brooklyn, New York studio (below), and her worktable with currency, tools, and works in progress



THE CONCEPTS OF status, necessity, and materialism are all instruments in the thematic toolbox of the contemporary art jeweler. For Lauren Tickle, these concepts are communicated through stunning, sculptural works of currency, silver, and steel—precious objects that also double as critiques of preciosity itself.

Tickle explores her powerful themes and intricate techniques from her apartment-studio in the Greenwood Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn. She constructs dazzling brooches and necklaces at a workbench within a paper airplane's throw of her bedroom, like most young artists trying to make a life in the city. In fact, Tickle draws creative inspiration from her living situation and surrounding environment. Just as a writer runs to the laptop after the creative light bulb goes off, Tickle has the capacity to get to work when inspiration calls. "There's something about that immediacy that I personally like. I can wake up at 4 A.M. and go into the studio and work," says Tickle of the accessibility of her workspace and practice. She often will start the day with a walk in the pristine gardens of the nearby Green-Wood Cemetery. Upon returning, Tickle pours a glass of water or iced tea, and then undertakes an hours-long marathon of intricate cutting and gluing of American currency.

This deep-seated familiarity has been the catalyst for the artistic and technical progression of her well-known "Increasing Value" series. Starting with paper models, Tickle subsequently works with her pliers, jeweler's saw, and other tools to create silver and steel objects of adornment, works covered with intricately cut patterns of $1, $2, $20, and even $50 bills. Early pieces in the "Increasing Value" series involve the build-up of the currency notes to create thickness and depth on a flat metal surface. However, her works of the last three years achieve added dimensionality through the shaping of the metal itself, as exemplified in such works as *$60.00 US Dollars, Currency Converted* brooch.

In using everyday American currency as both the materials, and the descriptive titles, for her intricate constructions,

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Tickle accomplishes what art jewelry often struggles to do: engage the public. Just as passersby are drawn to try to win a prize by estimating the amount of gumballs in a jar, casual viewers of Tickle's brooches and necklaces try to psychologically size up these objects and quantify the visual components—such as figuring out the "$30-ness" of a *$30 USD Brooch*. At the same time, breaking down jewelry into its raw monetary components—dollar signs—results in accusations of waste or unlawful destruction.

"I don't think I'm destroying," says Tickle in response to this criticism. On the contrary, she argues that the money itself is being transformed into works of artistic merit, objects sold for far more than the value of the raw currency. She is *literally* getting more bang for her buck.

New York City has been a powerful influence on the point of view of Tickle's recent studio practice. As a goldsmith at Manhattan's Reinstein/Ross gallery, Tickle is one block away from the fashion center of Fifth Avenue, an area characterized by the multiplicity of ways in which individual identity, values, and status are projected through material culture. Nevertheless, the essence of her "Increasing Value" work originates from a more inward, personal reflection upon putting life's priorities in proper order, a mindset that for Tickle stems from experiences in graduate school.

On Tickle's first day as a student at RISD, her friend Hilary Swaffield, the very individual responsible for Tickle's pursuit of her M.F.A. in jewelry and metalsmithing, passed away. This devastating experience led Tickle to ask herself: "What are things of actual value?" Her self-labeled "head game" of concept vs. process during her education also forced her to re-evaluate the role and influence of commodities. Swaffield's passing inspired Tickle's thesis work, a series entitled "Inconsolable Grief," and her friend continues to inform her work today.

A RISD course with Swedish jeweler Auli Laitinen led to Tickle's first work using currency, a stitched "Pravda" (Russian for "truth") handbag made out of a combination of real and facsimile U.S. currency. This conceptual development during her RISD training ran in parallel with her desire to expand beyond metal. She was undoubtedly influenced by her study of Alberto Burri, an Italian artist known for his virtuosic use of burlap, tar, and other raw materials for his sculptures.

Today Tickle continues to innovate in both materials and ideas. Her friend and co-worker Bella Neyman, gallery director at Reinstein/Ross, states, "While Lauren has found a material that she has made uniquely her own, she is not afraid to keep exploring, thereby keeping things interesting for us, and for herself." Illustrative of this progression is Tickle's recent "material exploration" through collaboration with Rhode Island's Kevin Hughes. Tickle and Hughes mailed each other physical materials and written quotes in an effort to expand each other's conceptual confines, and the resulting works will be featured in New Orleans for the 2017 SNAG Nexus exhibition "In Hot Water." Tickle's candy-red necklace made from cut and constructed reflective taillights was her first time working with this material in nearly a decade. The diversity of work she completed for the SNAG exhibition has opened her up to both vulnerability and exciting possibilities for the future. As Tickle confesses, "I feel like I haven't thought this way in a long time."

$60.00 US Dollars, Currency Converted (brooch), 2015
US dollars, silver, surgical steel, monofilament
5 1/8 x 5 1/8 x 1 1/8"

In early 2017, Tickle will be challenged geographically as well, when she relocates to New Orleans. This move coincides with the end of the "Increasing Value" series and, looking back, it is clear that collectively these works act as an homage to her time in New York. Tickle's future projects will be completed in what she intends to be her dream studio, and the hub for her practice for years to come. Whether in the Big Apple or the bayou, Tickle will continue to mesmerize audiences through technical virtuosity, expansive creative vision, and the cultivation of her physical and social surroundings.

Michael McMillan is Associate Curator at Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts.

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NEW ORLEANS

BY EILEEN MCCLELLAND

Hinderer's Iron Works (New Orleans)
Garden Bench (Passion Flower pattern), ca. 1900
iron
Photo courtesy The Historic New Orleans Collection

Opposite page, left:
Fence fragment, 19th century
cast iron
Photo courtesy The Historic New Orleans Collection

THE CITY OF New Orleans, with its centuries-old French Quarter buildings draped in cast-iron lace, is itself an ode to metalwork. As the city prepares to celebrate its 300th birthday in 2018, metal art in New Orleans, while often informed by the past, can also be as diverse and contemporary as its creators' imaginations. Innovation is being fueled, slowly but surely, by hands-on education and a proliferation of arts markets around the city.

Cast-iron adornment didn't come into vogue here until the mid-19th century. The first important cast-iron scrollwork was introduced to the French Quarter's Patalba apartment buildings in the 1840s. At the time, gates and railings were made by foundries in the Northeast, while their New Orleans counterparts were occupied with making equipment for the more profitable endeavor of sugar production, said Lydia Blackmore, curator of decorative arts for the Historic New Orleans Collection.

Jeweler Natalie Nichols, who has a BFA in jewelry and metalsmithing from the University of Houston, is driven to recreate those intricate cast-iron patterns in pendants, bracelets, and earrings, by bending and forging wire from sterling silver, sometimes using a black patina to further enhance the iron look of a piece. Nichols sells her work at both RHINO Gallery and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art shop.

Rachel David, a transplant from Maryland, puts her own spin on the decorative iron tradition: she hand-forges custom architectural and home furnishings, including gates, railings, and light sconces. David describes

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James Surls
Me, Knife, Diamond and Flower, installed 2008
bronze, steel
26 x 19 x 8'
Collection of The Helis Foundation, New Orleans

herself as a post-industrial, 21st-century blacksmith; she's also a modernist sculptor. Her 12-foot-tall abstract sculpture, *Weft*, made of more than a ton of steel, graces the corner of Poydras Street and Loyala Avenue in the Central Business District.

Recently, city arts organizations and patrons have made a high-profile commitment to sculpture. *Weft* is one of sixteen sculptures by Southern artists installed since 2013 along the Poydras corridor, which runs through the heart of New Orleans's business district, as part of the Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition, in cooperation with the Ogden Museum, the city parks department, and the Helis Foundation. Other notable Poydras sculptures include Enrique Alferez's bronze *Gymnast* and Lin Emery's kinetic *Octet*.

The Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden at the New Orleans Museum of Art is home to 63 works by artists from around the world in cast bronze, galvanized steel, stainless steel, aluminum, and marble, set amid 200-year-old live oaks, lawns, vines, and aquatic plantings in a tranquil five-acre garden set around a pond. Texan James Surls's sculpture, *Me, Knife, Diamond and Flower*, is displayed in front of the Ogden Museum.

The Ogden's permanent collection includes hand-hammered sterling silver bowls made in the 1920s by Grace Hall Stevens, who studied at Tulane University's Newcomb College. The Ogden has exhibited sculpture by Martin Payton and Alferez, and the jewelry of designer Mignon Faget, which is crafted by artisans in her Magazine Street workshop. Jane Winslow, manager of the Ogden's shop, says jewelry sells. Although pottery is popular as well, metal, in general, is easier to travel with. Early this year, the Ogden exhibited the work of Ben Caldwell, who makes hammered copper decorative items as well as jewelry. His work is also available in the store.

The Historic New Orleans Collection owns and exhibits the work of 19th-century silversmiths and goldsmiths trained in France, including Jean-Noel Delarue and Anthony Rasch. In its gift shop, Heather Elizabeth Designs sells silver necklaces and stickpins cast from original 19th-century Mardi Gras souvenir medals and pins.

When artist Thomas Mann relocated from the Northeast to New Orleans in 1982, he found a "metal-arts backwater," steeped in history and tradition, but fortunately also receptive to new ideas, including his techno-romantic jewelry aesthetic, which he describes as a precursor to steampunk. "That's why I did so well here early on," said Mann, whose Gallery I/O, Studio Flux school, and production studio share a large space on Magazine Street, which is home to shops, boutiques and restaurants frequented by locals and discerning tourists. "Nonprecious, contemporary jewelry was an oddity, and as a result I was successful really quickly. I was a big fish in a little pond."

Mann said the professional metal-arts community is still small in relation to the city's population. But as a result of the booming tourist industry (a record 10.1 million people visited in 2014), there is a market for meaningful, handmade, portable art. Mann, a sculptor as well as a jewelry artist with a national following, hosts frequent exhibits at Gallery I/O and also teaches metal workshops on site, inviting visitors to wander between his gallery, school, and studio spaces,

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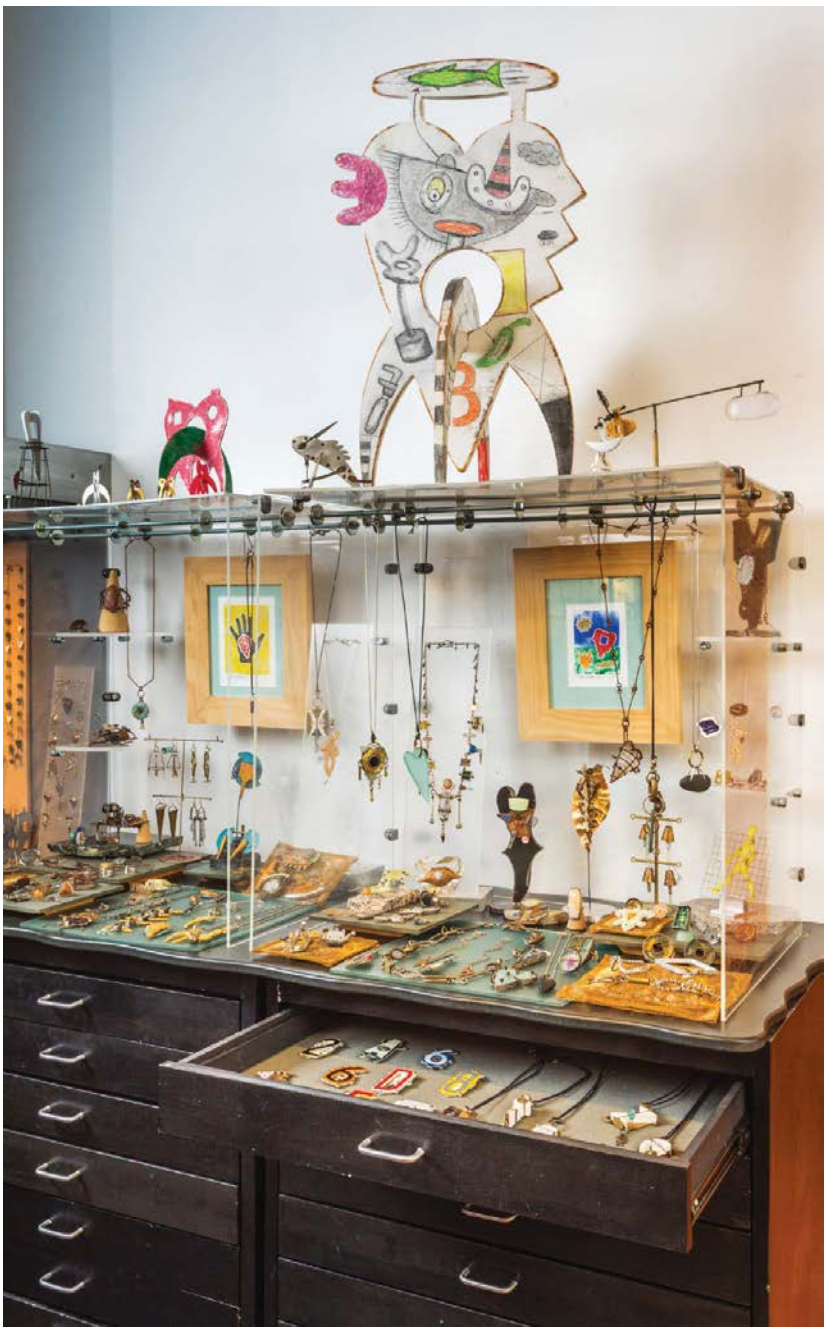

Interior display at Thomas Mann's Gallery I/O, on Magazine Street

breaking down barriers between the artistic process and the finished work.

Education in metal arts in the city tends to be organic, says Vitrice McMurray, founding member of the artist co-op RHINO Gallery. "We have two manufacturing studios here, Thomas Mann and Mignon Faget, and I know dozens of people who started out working for one or the other, learning the brass tacks of jewelry construction and then feeling confident enough to go out on their own." Gogo Borgerding, for example, graduated from Savannah College of Art and Design in metals and jewelry design in 2000, but worked for Mann before opening her funky gallery/boutique down the street from his, where she sells her colorful, handmade silver cuffs along with the work of other local artists.

The state's only bachelor's degree in metalsmithing is offered by the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, about 135 miles west of New Orleans. Daniel DiCaprio, assistant professor of metalwork and jewelry, currently teaches 10 majors, as well as a required beginning class for all art majors. So far, his students have gone on to work at Stuller, a jewelry manufacturer in Lafayette, or to graduate school out of state. "While some programs around the country are being cut, this one is actually expanding," DiCaprio says.

Xavier University of New Orleans offers a concentration in sculpture, a course of study that includes metal casting and welding. NOLA Metalsmithing school, was founded in 2003, then closed for five years after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. It reopened in 2010, to a flurry of interest, including among those who have tried wirework or assemblage and want to learn to use fire to manipulate the metal. "It's a sign of the times," DiCaprio said. "People seem to be increasingly interested in getting their hands dirty and participating in the studio arts directly." Instructor Stephen Donnelly, who teaches semester-length courses, also offers advanced independent study. "We are soldering from day one in the beginning classes, and there's a strong emphasis on visual design dynamics," Donnelly said. Many of his students want to make jewelry a career or at least supplement their incomes by selling online or at art markets, which are proliferating all over New Orleans.

The elite jewelry market in the city remains the contemporary crafts area at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, which attracted 425,000 visitors in 2016. "Some artists make the lion's share of their revenue during that time," Donnelly said. Mann has exhibited at Jazz Fest every year since 1977, when he first visited New Orleans for that reason. "Every jeweler in the area wants to get in and have that access to that audience," he said. "It's international and performs way better than any local show would."

RHINO Gallery (Right Here in New Orleans) draws visitors from all over the world seeking handmade quality souvenirs, who are also thrilled to discover that the artists are often on hand. Each RHINO artist works three days per month in the gallery; a dozen jewelers are included in the resident artist mix.

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Artist co-op RHINO Gallery (Right Here in New Orleans)

Class in progress at the NOLA Metalsmithing School

In the Warehouse Arts District of the Central Business District, Laurie Reed has found a lucrative niche at Ariodante Gallery on the gallery row of Julia Street, where she represents about 40 jewelry artists. Often she sits in a camp chair outside the gallery's front door, inviting passersby to stop in and check out the art, all crafted in Louisiana. The gallery is open every day, including Sundays, when it attracts church-going locals as well as cruise ship passengers looking for a souvenir with a story. "Last year, there might have been seven days that I didn't sell jewelry," Reed says. Prices range from $24 to just under $1,000. "We pulled in the smaller-dollar, high-quality artist with a price point that fits a whole new category," she said.

Reed meets many of her artists at the weekend Palmer Park Art Market, including silversmith Chester Allen, the gallery's top-selling metalworker, who calls himself The Silver Man and whose work reflects Louisiana themes. Reed's neighbor on Julia Street is a jeweler as well as an impressionist painter. At Beata Sasik Art Gallery, Sasik sells large sterling silver statement rings that incorporate collection-quality gemstones and handmade enamels.

Back on Magazine, Marion Cage McCollam's elegant jewelry in gold and silver makes architectural statements, particularly her arabesque bracelets and cuffs. McCollam, an architect who began designing and making jewelry in 2013, now has a gallery. She also makes hardware for cabinetry for the trade, or, as she describes it, "jewelry for furniture."

When artist Tom Mathis opened his gallery, Symmetry, in 1975, he, like Mann, felt like a pioneer. "There was no metal arts community here," Mathis said. "There were a few head shops, a couple of bead shops, and the jewelry stores here were *very* traditional. We were the first jewelry store in the city based on the concept of jewelry being art." Today Symmetry represents local and national artists alongside the case space devoted to Mathis's work. Like many New Orleans metal artists, Mathis finds creative energy in the traditions of New Orleans. Hand engraving in New Orleans has long been associated with classic monograms on silverware and pendants, calligraphy, family crests, and ciphers, in which the letters interlock.

Interest in all styles of metal arts in New Orleans is growing as artists recognize its potential as an enclave of creativity, and residents and visitors alike crave handmade treasures that reflect their love of the city.

Eileen McClelland, a resident of New Orleans, is managing editor of INSTORE, *the magazine for North American jewelry store owners.*

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WEAR OH WEAR

BY RACHELLE THIEWES

Motoko Furuhashi
A Mountain, 2016
3 x 3 x 1 1/8"
tape, road segments, brass, silver, powder coat, paint
Photo: Motoko Furuhashi

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Growing up, my favorite hangout was my father's engraving studio. Jewelry, flatware sets, hollowware, and guns filled the space, waiting for him to engrave their surfaces. In this environment, my education in looking at objects closely and with careful consideration began. Often, when handing me a piece of jewelry or a large silver tray just completed, my father would ask, "What do you see?" On a good day I was allowed to try on a piece of jewelry and dream of it being mine to wear forever.

As a young maker in the late 1970s, I met Edward de Large, and had my first true "gotta-have" moment. His titanium work was pure magic. For the next year and a half I sent him $25 a month until a brooch with milky clouds and floating diamond shapes was finally mine to look at and wear forever. I had no idea at the time that "collecting fever" would continue to impact my life so strongly.

My interests are wide and varied: unfinished work resting in anxious contemplation on the bench; jewelry so fragile that wearing it may bring destruction, a lifespan limited by material choices; minimal forms with intricate surfaces; or the ghostly movement of a jewel being worn at another time in another place. All of these works I find intriguing and ultimately would treasure the experience of wearing.

Rachelle Thiewes is an artist who lives and works in El Paso, Texas.

Sharon Portelance
Grey Matter #5, 2014
pendant 4 x 4"
sterling silver, coated steel cord
Photo: Robert Diamante

Sayumi Yokouchi
"Making without much adding" twins, 2016
copper wire (color coated), yellow gold
1 1/2 x 2 3/8 x 2 3/8"
Photo: Sayumi Yokouchi

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3

4

1
Caroline Gore
Untitled (in progress), 2016
slip-cast porcelain, glaze
3/4 x 3 3/4 x 1 3/4"
Photo: Caroline Gore

2
Joan Parcher
Violet Light Brooch, 2012
reflective glass and enamel on steel, sterling silver
2 1/2 x 2 1/2 x 5/16"
Photo: PM Photography

3
Julia Barello
Bluegreen, 2016
dyed recycled x-ray film
4 x 3"
Photo: Monica Martinez

4
Julia Turner
Mill Necklace #4, 2015
ebonized walnut, enamel paint, linen
6 3/4 x 4 1/4 x 1/4" (adjustable)
Photo: Julia Turner

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Barbara Paganin wearing brooches from series "Memoria Aperta," 2014
Photo: Alice Pavesi Fiori

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by Elizabeth Essner

The Metamorphosis of Barbara Paganin

With the natural world as her primary subject, this Italian jeweler takes further inspiration from the twists and turns of her personal life.

When jeweler Barbara Paganin was a little girl growing up in Venice, Italy, her grandmother gave her a tiny dress-up doll. She loved it, especially its miniature shoes, which she would often remove and carry in her pocket. While walking one day, she accidentally dropped the shoes on the street, never to be found again. "For years, and sometimes even now," she says, "when I pass that street, I look at the ground hoping to find them."

Perhaps then it is no surprise that the smallest Mary Janes, the slightest high heels, the most impossibly doll-sized boots—all meticulously made—can be found piled up or nestled in among the mementoes, gems, porcelain animals, and portrait miniatures that inhabit Paganin's series, "Memoria Aperta" (Open Memory). These found and fabricated miniature worlds invite the viewer to imagine their own stories in the artist's memory-soaked jewels. Composed of 25 brooches completed between 2011 and 2013, along with a more recent grouping of necklaces, together they reflect a pointed transition in the artist's evolution.

Before the "Memoria Aperta" series perhaps it was easier to categorize the more than two decades of the goldsmith's work. Drawn from nature, each of her series could be seen as an almost scientific inquiry: insects, corals, melons, cabbages, cauliflower. One might have assumed that Paganin identified her subject, researched, explored it to its fullest, and moved on. But this would not be the whole story.

While the natural world has often been her subject, Paganin's internal narrative has always driven her artistry. As her interior life shifts, her work changes in accord. Using Goethe and his *The Metamorphosis of Plants* as her guide, she explains that for the poet-biologist-philosopher, "the study of the natural sciences helped him understand his inner self." Goethe's belief that both the seen and unseen stem from a single source—a universal leaf—speaks to Paganin's own progression. In Goethe's words:

> *Researchers have been generally aware for some time that there is a hidden relationship among various external parts of the plant that develop one after the other and, as it were, one out of the other (for example, leaves, calyx, corolla, and stamens); they have even investigated the details. The process by which one and the same organ appears in a variety of forms has been called the metamorphosis of plants.*[1]

Paganin further illustrates her process by way of an unlikely source: two cult movie characters: Little Otik, a surrealist tree-root-turned-live-baby from the Czech film *Otesánek (Greedy Guts)* and No-Face, an ambiguous Japanese anime

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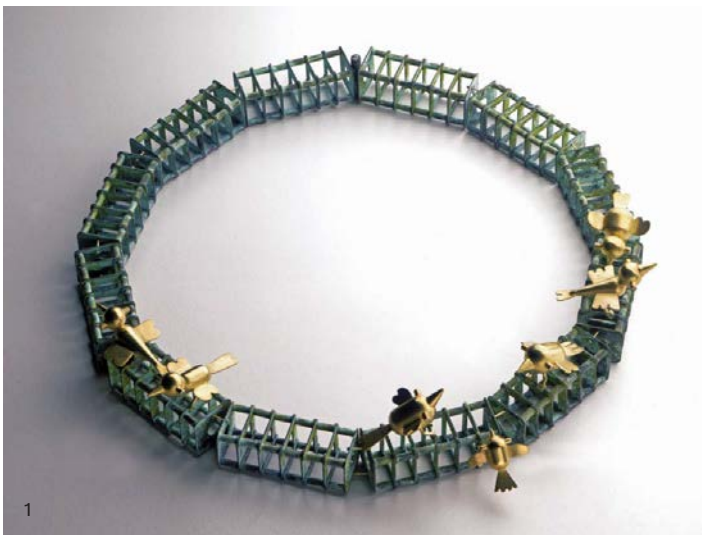

1
Ornitologioia (Ornithojoy) (necklace), 1993
gold, patinated silver, diamonds
diameter 7"
Private Collection, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
Photo: Lorenzo Trento

2
Solo (Alone) (necklace), 1994
patinated silver, gold, diamonds
diameter 7 7/8"
Private Collection, Venice
Photo: Lorenzo Trento

3
Anemone Rosso (Red Anemone) (brooch), 1996
gold, oxidized silver, Venetian glass beads
2 3/8 x 1 1/2 x 1 3/8"
Private Collection, Padua
Photo: Lorenzo Trento

4
Melone (Melon) (brooch), 1999
gold, patinated silver, fresh water pearls, Venetian glass seed beads
diameter 2 5/8"
Private Collection, Tiburon, California
Photo: Michele Zanin

creature in *Spirited Away*.[2] Both have insatiable appetites and swallow things (and people) whole, only to vomit them back up. Likewise, "I ingest images, sensations, emotions, and then I give back jewelry," says Paganin. But talk of emotion and intuition should not suggest that Paganin is improvisational in technique. Her expertise is rooted in the study of both sculpture (at l'Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice) and goldsmithing (at l'Istituto Statale d'Arte in Venice). Her deftness with materials both precious and unconventional is well known. In fact, it is the tension between these two forces—the technical and emotional—that fully reveals her work.

While Paganin was born in Venice in 1961 and has lived there most of her life, her jewelry history largely begins 25 miles away in Padua, where more recently some 130 of her works were on view at

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the Oratorio di San Rocco. Her 2015 retrospective marked nearly 30 years since she chaired the professional design and project in Metals and Jewelry at l'Instituto d'Arte P. Selvatico, a post she held from 1987 to 1988. As she crossed paths with many leaders of the famed Padua School (citing particular influence from fellow goldsmith Piergiuliano Reveane) Paganin's own early explorations translate the School's reading of pure form into a beetle, cicada, mudskipper, and centipede, each playfully reduced to its geometric conclusion.

Although she has since taken a more international path, Padua was an early foundation. Of this, retrospective curator Maria Cosotto Nalon writes, "Paganin, in fact, while retaining her creative autonomy, shares with the Paduan approach the methodological and planning earnestness, the obstinate experimentation of techniques and materials, the basic principle of descriptive geometry and a harmonious balance of forms..."[3]

In 1988 Paganin returned to Venice to head the goldsmith program at what is now the Michelangelo Guggenheim Art School, a role she still serves today. Early on, her scope widened to include the study of plants, creating forms from their structure, and she discovered Ernst Haeckel's seminal study, *Art Forms in Nature*, along the way. Two necklaces from the mid-1990s, when taken together, begin to reveal a psychological dimension within Paganin's natural forms. *Ornitologioia (Ornitholojoy)* (1993) hosts seven gold birds, free, cheerfully perched on a patinated silver necklace, simultaneously plantlike and cagelike. *Solo (Alone)* (1994) follows; the necklace's structure expands, but only one bird remains gazing ambiguously skyward.

In 1994, the same year she made *Solo*, Paganin began scuba diving. Maurizio, her husband at the time, was a seaman, and she followed him to the horn of Africa and the Hanish Islands in Yemen and Eritrea, discovering undersea life. Jewels soon emerged in her work: anemones expressed in sprays of Venetian glass beads, corals as brooches, and necklaces in oxidized and patinated silver, with Paganin's early geometry gradually loosening into the organic.

The garden is an ongoing muse, and pods, celery, and melons began to appear in 1998. Seeds—the center of life—are portrayed in river pearls and antique Venetian glass beads peeking out from the interiors, which are translated into pierced and perforated screens of gold. Edging ever closer to Goethe, cabbages are next, their leaves sliced to become rings, bracelets, and the 2009 series "Foglia Primordiale" (Primordial Leaf). These pieces take on a skinlike quality, at once abstract and completely recognizable. Cauliflower varieties soon emerge, rendered first in cast Murano glass, which Paganin began to study in-depth in 2006 after earning the Trieste Contemporanea prize the same year. In 2009, she integrated dental plaster into her repertoire, its vibrant luminescence used to articulate the fractal patterns of the Romanesco cauliflower.

Among these deceptively straightforward subjects there are many undercurrents, and the city of Venice is chief among them. It is first revealed in her choice of materials: antique Venetian beads, cast and lamp-worked Murano glass, and the found objects of "Memoria Aperta." But it was in 2002 that Venice

"I ingest images, sensations, emotions, and then I give back jewelry."

Foglia Promordiale (Primordial Leaf) (bracelet), 2009
patinated silver
diameter 4 1/8"
Private Collection, Padua
Photo: Michele Zanin

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took on a greater symbolic meaning. After 18 years of renting the same home on the island, Paganin was evicted. She was devastated. But, while digging the soil to prepare the garden in her new home, located in the nearby mainland town of Oriago where she still lives today, Paganin uncovered potsherds of Venetian ceramics and glass, hundreds of years old. Comforted, she recalls, "I was very happy to have found my Venice again in my garden." The fragments were integrated into "Venice in My Vegetable Garden," a 2004 series of five composed brooches. Quite literally digging up the past, they can be seen as an early precursor to "Memoria Aperta."

In a recent portrait Paganin stands, hands folded, wearing all 25 brooches that make up the "Memoria Aperta" series. Forthright and assured, her enigmatic smile—not unlike the Mona Lisa's—only hints at what is under the surface. Her jewels, on the other hand, offer up many tales. Although in the series Paganin casts a net as wide as her psyche, the works are made with the viewer in mind. Consequently, the artist is hesitant to provide too much of her own insight. "When I talk about what these pins mean to me, I block out other people's imagination, so I tend not to say much about them," she explains.

A gathering place for both lost and found, there is a tenderness in the cast silver teacups and tiny animals of long-ago childhood fairy tales—and also in the trinkets, some inherited, some found among the antique shops of Venice. There are ghosts, too, not only in the portraits but in the perforated surfaces that have become a signature for Paganin, solid and transparent at the same time. Facets of earlier work emerge, resurfacing to mix into the antique: a deeply hued glass cauliflower here, coral salvaged from a dive there.

Women, men, mothers, and babies take many forms—in the case of *No. 6*, ceramic hippopotami, lovingly cling to one another amidst a historical sea. Although "Memoria Aperta" and Paganin's more recent necklaces represent a new path—even perhaps by Goethe's definition, a metamorphosis—her past, it seems, was waiting for her present.

While the artist intends for the viewer to impart meaning onto these pieces, "in some way it represents her need to 'talk in the first person' about her life," explains

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Opposite page:
Concresecenza Arancione (Orange Accretion) (necklace), 2011
oxidized silver, polymethulmethscrylate, gold
9 7/8 x 10 5/8 x 1 1/8"
Collection of Helen Williams Drutt English, Philadelphia
Photo: Barbara Paganin

Right:
Memoria Aperta n. 6 (brooch), 2011-13
oxidized silver, porcelain, part of watch, ebony, coral, morganite, gold
3 3/8 x 3 1/8 x 1 3/8"
Photo: Alice Pavesi Fiori

Although Paganin casts a net as wide as her psyche, the works are made with the viewer in mind.

Venezia ne mio orto (Venice in my vegetable garden) (brooch), 2004
oxidized silver, gold, diamonds, XVII finds
3 x 1 5/8 x 1 1/2"
Photo: Michele Zanin

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Valeria Accornero, curator of the 2014 "Memoria Aperta" exhibition, held at the Palazzo Fortuny in Venice.[4] With that, it is perhaps useful to know about a formative event in Paganin's history, which took place even before she was born. Paganin is the second daughter born in Venice to a mother, father, and older brother; sadly, the family's first daughter had died just before birth. "My father was a carpenter," Paganin recalls, "and made her a small white coffin. Her name was Barbara." She continues, "I was born and named Barbara, as a substitute for my sister. This affected me deeply. What would have happened if my sister hadn't died? Would I be here?"

Although Paganin largely remains quiet about her own story within the works, "this also means she allows herself to mix up her memories with those of others without losing her way," says Accornero.[5] And with some prodding, Paganin reveals that *No. 21* is dedicated to her former husband and the father of her two daughters, Maurizio, who was lost at sea in 2013, his body never found. Barely figurative, its carved bone head meets a body of cast silver cauliflower, one shoe, and two small mice, all nearly black with oxidation. Studded

Left:
Memoria Aperta no. 21 (brooch), 2011–13
oxidized silver, ivory, glass, emeralds, gold
3 3/4 x 1 5/8 x 1 1/8"
Photo: Alice Pavesi Fiori

Above:
Nontiscordardime (Forget-me-not) (necklace), 2015
oxidized silver, glass, porcelain, bone, ivory, painted bronze, gold
13 3/4 x 6 5/8 x 1 1/2"
Photo: Michele Zanin

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with a few small emeralds and one large stone, his companion, a bird wrapped with just two gold wires, leans towards him ever so slightly.

This subtlety of composition, so essential to the work, is best understood in multiple views—on and off the body. Perspective is key, explains Matthew Drutt in the catalog for *Barbara Paganin: Memoria Aperta*, shown at Philadelphia Art Alliance in 2016 (Paganin's solo debut in the U.S.). *Nontiscordardime (Forget-me-not)* (2015) provides an apt example for Drutt: "Worn on the body, it looks like some fantastic breastplate of youthful power," he writes. "Seen on a flat surface, it radiates a nostalgic yearning for lost innocence."[6]

Unlike "Memoria Aperta," *Silenzi (Silences)* (2012) is purely autobiographical. For her Padua retrospective, Paganin says, "I placed it alone, in the center of the room." The necklace is composed of seven objects, each cradled in a womblike cabbage-leaf bed. Among them: a rabbit whose decorative collar is also its cage; a mouse, eyes closed, wrapped in its gold wire mount; charms in the form of a silver shell and a beloved boot; and two dolls—one dressed in gold. This tour-de-force is held together by a series of thin gold wires, tenuous and strong at the same time.

Dualities such as this have informed Paganin's work—and perhaps her life—over the last three decades, as she has slowly moved from the outside in. Today she finds herself in the vast territory of memory, a very different place from where she began. Another 25 brooches from the "Memoria Aperta" series are planned next, and while narrative jewelry is the world she exists in today, her metamorphosis likely continues. Says Paganin, "I have been going out a lot in my kayak, and maybe something will come from this—we will see." ◆

Elizabeth Essner is a Brooklyn-based independent design writer, researcher, and a 2017 Curatorial Fellow for the Center for Craft, Creativity & Design in Asheville, North Carolina.

Today she finds herself in the vast territory of memory, a very different place from where she began.

Silenzi (Silences)
(necklace), 2012
oxidized silver, porcelain, resin, gold
diameter 10 5/8"
Collection of Helen Williams Drutt English, Philadelphia
Photo: Ken Yanoviak

All quotes by Barbara Paganin are from an email interview between artist and author, August–September 2016. Italian to English translation by Christina Grillo. / **1.** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Metamorphosis of Plants*, 1790. Reprint with introduction and photography by Gordon L. Miller (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2009) 5-6 Reader e-book. / **2.** Little Otik is a character in *Otesánek (Greedy Guts)*, directed by Jan Švankmajer, 2000, Czech Republic. *Spirited Away* is directed by Hayao Miyazaki, 2001, Japan. / **3.** Mirella Cisotto Nalon, "Cabbage, Beauty, Memory and Other Stories: Barbara Paganin's Jewels" in exhibition catalog *Barbara Paganin: Dall'oroto alla soffitta (From the Vegetable Garden to the Attic)* (Padua, Italy: Comune di Padua, 2015) 13. / **4.** Valeria Accornero, email interview with author, August – September 2016. *Barbara Paganin: Memoria Aperta* was shown at Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, Italy, March 8 – July 14, 2014 and the CODA Museum, Appledoorn, the Netherlands from May 23–August 16, 2015. / **5.** Ibid. / **6.** Matthew Drutt, "Barbara Paganin: The Ambiguity of Memory and Objecthood" in exhibition catalog *Barbara Paganin: Memoria Aperta* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Art Alliance, 2016) np.

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1

2

3

DOUBLE

4

The work of these collaborative pairs gives proof to the old adage that two heads are better than one.

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5

6

7

8

VISION

COLLABORATIONS IN METAL

by Judy Wagonfeld

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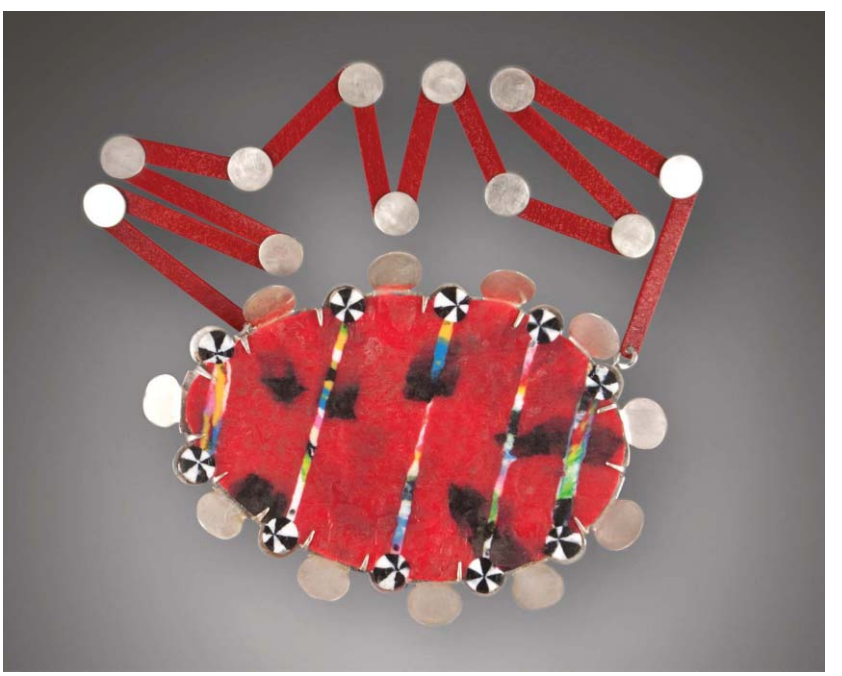
1

Jacquie & Uosis
Old Snow (brooch), 2016
sterling silver, plastic
3 x 4 3/4 x 1/8"
Photo: Uosis Juodvalkis

Jacquie & Uosis
Really Red, 2016
necklace, sterling silver
and plastic
9 x 6 1/2 x 2/8"
Photo: Uosis Juodvalkis



"First you get house plants and maintain them together. Then you try a pet. Then a baby. If all that works, *then* you can *try* collaborating in art," laughs Uosis Juodvalkis. He's half-joking, as is his wife and creative partner Jacquie Rice, who chimes in, "It's all fine as long as he obeys me." Obviously, for this Prescott, Arizona, couple, humor diffuses a raft of conflicts between partners striving toward a unified vision.

An old saying, "You cannot clap with one hand alone," defines the motif of "A Meeting of Minds," an exhibition showcasing co-creating artists, held at Seattle's Facèré Gallery last May. The show featured the work of several artistic pairs, revealing a range of approaches to artistic mergers and raising key questions about the creative process.

Historically, co-authorship lacked credence in the eyes of critics and clients. Although the Old Masters employed assistants, convention credited only the known painter. The dawn of collaborative acceptance emerged with the Impressionists' communal color exploration and the subsequent radical experiments of Dada, Constructivism, and Surrealism. The latter groups bucked tradition, producing and signing art collectively. Duos remained rare, but a door had opened. Innovative teams cropped up in the late 20th century. Christo Javacheff and Jeanne-Claude wrote about their monumental fabric projects as "ideas from two hearts and two brains."[1] The German photographers Bernd and Hilla Becher, equally fascinated by industrial architecture, always worked as one. Gilbert & George, the provocative British artists, raised collaboration to the extreme by merging as a single artist. "We... make one art that doesn't distinguish between us. You don't see... the handwritten message that every artist is so proud of."[2] Their major exhibition at London's Tate Modern in 2007 solidified the critical and institutional acceptance of the two as one unit, flashing a green light to aspiring collaborators.

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2

Ford & Forlano
Tube Necklace (085), 2015
polymer clay, sterling silver, and magnetic clasp
29 x 3"
Photo: Ford & Forlano

Ford & Forlano
Big Bead Necklace (151), 2016
polymer clay, sterling silver, and magnetic clasp
23 x 1 1/2"
Photo: Ford & Forlano

In a pair, the mandatory "hand of the artist" takes a back seat to joint effort, akin to bird pairs gathering twigs and building a nest. Who designed it or carried more material makes no difference. The outcome counts. Of course, it's tougher for artists who, unlike birds, have egos. Can they lasso that pesky pride and hold it at bay? What if the project fails? Who accepts blame? Can credit be shared? Can the duo communicate; talk and listen?

"We do everything together; arguing before, during, and after," Juodvalkis explains. The couple's humorous repartee reveals mutual respect, trust, and validation. When they met in the early '90s, Rice served as dean of fine arts and ceramics at Rhode Island School of Design. Juodvalkis owned a commercial photography studio with a cutting-edge color lab. Obsessed with the lab's Adobe Photoshop, Rice blended colors, adjusted tones, and manipulated images as if a child discovering the freedom of bicycling. Prompted by a relative's suggestion to design textiles, the couple mastered dyes and fabrics. They screened lyrical, kaleidoscopic patterns for clothing Rice constructed. Juodvalkis learned jewelry techniques. As collaborating "makers," they founded Gild the Lily, a multihued collection of clothing and jewelry. With a philosophy of viewing mistakes as feedback, their business thrived.

Similarly, in 1987, a friend steered painters Steve Ford and David Forlano toward polymer jewelry, applying Ford's glassmaking background. Earlier, when the duo met while studying art in Rome, Ford remembers a comfortable give and take. "My figures were tall and thin and David's were short and fat, so we corrected each other's work." In that spirit they launched "Citizen Cane," a polymer jewelry line that proliferated to the point of requiring a factory to keep up. Rejecting mass production, they took time off to acquire skills geared towards one-of-a-kind work. As they re-entered the market, Forlano married and moved to Santa Fe, leaving a bereft Ford in

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3

Janis Kerman & Erin Wahed
Ring, 2016
sterling silver, oxidized sterling silver, 18k yellow gold, 18k palladium white gold
Photo: Dale Gould DGPix

Janis Kerman & Erin Wahed
Ring, 2016
sterling silver, 18k gold, white moonstone
Photo: Dale Gould DGPix

Philadelphia. Through counseling, they resolved feelings of abandonment and guilt and forged a thriving long-distance partnership via phone, internet, and snail mail. Exchanging their strikingly hued and hypnotically patterned pieces, they add and subtract segments, later embellished by a trusted metalsmith collaborator. No matter who makes or completes the piece, it's labeled as Ford/Forlano Art Jewelry.

The mother-daughter pair Janis Kerman and Erin Wahed also live apart, in Montreal and New York respectively, Skyping, texting, and talking daily. Kerman, herself a jeweler for 40 years, guided her daughter in developing prototypes for edgy, unisex jewelry based in spare Bauhaus design. Produced in Kerman's studio by assistants, it sells under the label Bande des Quatres (BDQ). As she needed to focus on her own work (sold in 30 galleries), Kerman divided the responsibilities. "[Erin] brainstorms, I make it come to life, and she markets and sells it," she explains.

Detroit metalsmiths Amy Weiks and Gabriel Craig began with hammered steel, bronze, and copper jewelry. Now, as owners of Smith Shop, they've added handmade functional housewares and construction items such as railings and grates. Their success arises from a "great merging of complimentary skills and identical interests," Craig says, explaining, "You've got to trust the other person even if you don't see their vision." The pair disagrees frequently. "When we can't quite explain a vision, we draw it." The practice allows their disparate aesthetic sensibilities to drive work neither would make individually. As Amy's father said at their wedding, "When Gabriel and Amy are together, they create a third person."

Craig, who taught a graduate seminar on jewelry collaboration, says, "...We talked about authorship: letting go of it frees you to take risks and go with other's ideas. You learn to take ego out of the equation and make the best possible product."

Ford and Forlano agree. "We're not intimidated...We talk about why we disagree," notes Ford. "We've each won and lost. It's not the end of the world when you don't get your way." Forlano adds, "If I hate it and he loves it, we let the public decide."

So, how and why does collaboration begin and proceed? Generally, like-minded people brainstorm and spark ideas. Such is the case with the Mexican-American brothers Einar and Jamex de la Torre, whose irreverent, vibrant art attacks the moral taboos and political correctness of their dual cultures through jesting and teasing. Einar says, "We started (collaborating) in the 1980s... there's a 'cumulative effect' when we work together... it has to do with complete abandon... we are interested in the way it can open an artist's palette, viewpoint and possibilities... an accumulation of influences we mix up and spit out."[3]

In the '60s, when Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat attempted

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Gabriel Craig & Amy Weiks
Kin Series Clip Brooch, 2016
mild steel, bronze, copper; forged, engraved, and riveted
9 x 2 1/2 x 5/8"
Photo: Amy Weiks

Gabriel Craig & Amy Weiks
Kin Series Necklace, 2016
mild steel, bronze, forged, fabricated, and engraved
21 1/2 x 2 3/4 x 1/4"
Photo: Amy Weiks

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5

Kranitzky & Overstreet
Bloodline (brooch), 2016
brass, acrylic, glass, shell, paper, thread, copper, wood, hair, and found objects
4 1/2 x 3 3/4 x 1"
Photo: Allen Hurdle

Kranitzky & Overstreet
Reveal (brooch), 2016
acrylic, wood, bamboo, shell, paper, brass, copper, porcupine quills, glass, thread, wood putty, acetate, found objects
6 1/2 x 4 x 1 1/4"
Photo: Allen Hurdle

collaboration, Basquiat slathered paint over parts of Warhol's imagery. To critics, it lacked integrity or merit. But later, starting from scratch, they constructed *Ten Punching Bags (Last Supper)* (1986–87), a startling installation against ideological oppression. According to Victor Bockris's *Warhol: A Biography*, the piece won raves because "it was like some crazy art world marriage and they were the odd couple... rebellious again."[4]

Sometimes a catalyst ignites mutual creativity. For Virginia-based artists Robin Kranitzky and Kim Overstreet, a friend served as a matchmaker, arranging introductions. Now, having been jewelry partners with Kranitzky for 30 years, Overstreet reflects, "You have to swallow your pride." Over the years, family and life stressors sometimes trigger moodiness or irritability. Neither takes it personally because, Kranitzky says, "Nothing can fester or it will show up in the work." Their artist statement reflects compatibility: "... our minds meet in the form of a tornado, two air streams spinning cultural debris into a larger, more singular form. We twist individual concepts, objects and materials...until they miraculously funnel into a cohesive narrative brooch." In fact, they laugh, people "think of them as one person."

In reality, the work is more labor of love than miracle. The two brainstorm, accessing a common muse; Kranitsky jots down inspirations, metaphors, and symbolism, while Overstreet sketches. Stockpiles of found objects such as broken jewelry, charms, postcards, and old watches coalesce in contemplative collaged brooches. Vignettes chronicle myriad themes of love, loss, sports, holidays, politics, rituals, and life, told through miniature window displays or quirky shapes; all seemingly vintage or Victorian.

At the far extreme of collaboration, New York artists Alex Schweder and Ward Shelley depend on each other's physical movements. The two met at the American Academy in Rome, already well-established architectural and performing

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Roberta & David Williamson
He Felt Her Gaze (brooch), 2016
bronze, sterling silver, fine silver, coral, 18kth century hand-colored engraving, vintage French cameo
4 3/4 x 3 x 3/4"
Photo: David and Roberta Williamson

Roberta & David Williamson
Botanical Necklace, 2016
sterling and fine silver, quartz crystal, paper
19 x 1 1/2 x 1/2"
Photo: Dan Fox

arts professionals. Each fascinated with the other's practice, they parlayed their multiplicity of skills to create five habitable performance works. Schweder says, "We always process [thoughts] through the grindstone of the other guy; we have to let go and trust each other." In *Stability* (2009), a divided seesaw platform bobbed up and down, depending on the occupants' positions. In *ReActor* (2016), a 44-by-8-foot structure perched atop a 15-foot concrete column at the OMI International Art Center (Ghent, New York), the pair occupy opposite ends. Meanwhile, the work rotates 360 degrees in response to the artists' movements and exterior forces. For their next project, *Counterweight Roommate*, the pair will inhabit a ceiling-height installation in the lobby of New York's Museum of Modern Art in 2018. Tethered to either end of a single rope, the artists' ascent or descent will depend on the other's counterweight; a true 24-hour effort in cooperation.

For some artists, collaboration seems second nature. Roberta and David Williamson say they *never* disagree. That's not believable until you learn that they met at the age of 18, in art school. "Dave asked me on a date. He said he was planning on garbage picking and would that be okay," Roberta explains. "We drove up and down streets, looking for things we connected with...it was an adrenaline rush." David adds, "Most girls would never go out with me another time, but she couldn't wait to go again." They bonded immediately. Now living and teaching in Berea, Ohio, they see no separation between life and work. "Our interests are so intertwined," Roberta says. They do everything together; teaching, cooking, gardening, exploring literature, and collecting trinkets and antique prints for jewelry.

"The key to collaboration is... to create the flow of ideas," says Roberta. Even though they think almost identically, Roberta says, "The biggest thing is to let ego go." At their workbench, they compose found and fabricated curios, "layering

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7

Dan Adams & Cynthia Toops
Moroccan Necklace, 2016
neckpiece, polymer clay, flame worked glass beads, found and vintage beads
8 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 1"
Photo: Doug Yaple

Dan Adams & Cynthia Toops
Girl with Beasts, 2016
necklace, polymer clay micromosaic, polymer clay beads, flame worked glass beads, old Chinese silver bezel
6 3/4 x 9 1/2 x 1/4"
Photo: Dan Adams

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Jana Brevick & Hahn Rossman
Impulse Series: Instinct
(bracelet), 2016
chrome plated hollow steel tubing
3 1/2 x 3 1/2"
Photo: Jana Brevick

Jana Brevick & Hahn Rossman
Impulse Series: Polarity
(bracelet), 2016
chrome plated hollow steel tubing
3 1/2 x 3 1/2 x 3 1/2"
Photo: Jana Brevick

them like a dance from our hands," creating nostalgia. An antique moth rests atop silver rearranged branches. Insects or bits of nature nestle below domes or behind windows of segments linked into evocative assemblages. Like other partners they speak of "a third person created between us."

Another simpatico couple, Seattle artists Cynthia Toops and Dan Adams, keep to a daily 6A.M. ritual of strolling to a coffee bar. Over breakfast they confer on jewelry design, colors, shows, and works in progress. "We don't always agree," says Dan, noting Toops's tenacious personality. But the communication effort pays off in soulful brooches, necklaces, and earrings imbued with imagery as compelling as falling snow.

Adams has a day job managing a pathology laboratory and Toops works in her home studio. Her renowned polymer mosaics depict animals, people, and landscapes. Construction demands intensive preparation and focus to place minute clay strands via tweezers. After dinner, Toops continues her mosaics, while Adams crafts glass beads in his backyard studio. Toops incorporates these, at times wrapped in soft yarns or covered in seed beads, in folk-arty strands and pendants. The work reflects their life, interests, and a home filled with art books, magazines, games, and ethnic art.

New to collaboration, Jana Brevick and husband Hahn Rossman fashioned hollow steel tubing bracelets that twist and turn as if a quizzical hardware item. Slipped on a wrist, they transform into architectural mementoes. Rossman, owner of a metal fabrication shop and a bicycle builder, became versed in Brevick's jewelry vocabulary, while she accepted Rossman's direction in his world of materials.

Successful collaboration is an exercise in "slow work," a melange of positives, negatives, and possibilities tossed like the ingredients of a salad. Curiosity and passion for the work teaches partners to explain rather than defend ideas. Their quest requires commitment, problem-solving, dialogue, introspection, sacrifice, and vulnerability. Each member foregoes hierarchy and narcissism to work harmoniously and have fun. Collaborators dip into each other's souls, submerging ego and independence for the magic of minds meeting as one. ◆

Judy Wagonfeld is a freelance writer living in Seattle, WA.

1. Website: christojeanneclaude.net/faq / **2.** "Collaboration in Art (11), *Huffington Post: Fine Art Views Blog*, David Galenson and Clayne Pope, December 12, 2012, p. 1, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-galenson/collaboration-in-art-ii_b_1930264.html / **3.** *Einar & Jamex de la Torre: Intersecting Time & Place*, exhibition catalog, Museum of Glass, Tacoma, WA. 2005, p. 3, from Interview with Gronk. / **4.** Ronny Cutrone quoted in *Warhol: The Biography* by Victor Bockris, Da Capo Press: Cambridge, 2003, pp. 461–2.

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PRESENT PERFECT: THE METALWORK OF ŌSUMI YUKIE

The first woman to be designated a Living National Treasure for metalwork, Ōsumi Yukie has creatively stretched the venerated traditions of Japanese craft.

by Toni Greenbaum

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Ōsumi Yukie
High Tide Comes In, 2007
hammered silver with nunome zōgan
in lead and gold
9 1/2 x 9"
Photo courtesy Onishi Gallery,
New York, NY

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Despite rapid technological advances, such as 3D printing, metalsmiths around the world continue to cherish a methodology that has altered little for centuries. In Japan, traditional techniques are especially revered, with the primary concerns of studio crafts, in general, remaining substance and skill. Although some contemporary makers have experimented with the latest ideas, most are still rooted in the tried and true, pursuing stylistic growth within customary frameworks. Metalsmiths are no exception, even though there are those who have devised original approaches.

Nakagawa Mamoru (b. 1947; designated Living National Treasure in 2004), for example, imbues his cast alloy vessels with unprecedented coloration achieved through metal inlay (*zōgan*), while Ōzawa Kōmin (b. 1941; designated Living National Treasure in 2005), a master of *yakigata* (casting by firing), conceived a new technique, termed *igurumi* (cast-wrapping), whereby metal embellishments are attached to the surface of a mold prior to the infusion of molten metal. Hannya Tamotsu (b. 1941), a 16th-generation metalsmith, uses the traditional *fukiwake* casting technique. Patterns are formed by two different metals being poured into a single mold within five seconds of one another, with each remaining distinct rather than blending—much like pictures made from colored sand layered in a bottle—as a result of the differences in their melting points; his particular genius lies in his success casting *three* metals.

One of the most compelling masters among contemporary Japanese smiths is Ōsumi Yukie, who was not only designated a Living National Treasure in 2015, but has the distinction of being the first woman to be so honored for metalwork. Although her own signature style is continually evolving, it is within the established norm; since 1976, she has been a routine contributor to the Japanese Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition (*Nihon Dentō Kōgei Ten*), a broad-based event begun in 1954 as a celebration of the renewed national pride in Japan's brilliant aesthetic heritage that erupted after World War Two. Her objects have also been included in international

Nakagawa Mamoru
Mado (Window), 2015
cast alloy of copper, silver, and tin with inlays of copper, silver, and gold
11 x 13 3/4 x 7"
Photo courtesy Onishi Gallery, New York, NY

Opposite page, top:
Ōzawa Kōmin
Hi to Mizu To (Of Fire and Water), 2009
yakigata metal casting
9 1/2 x 16 1/2 x 4"
Photo courtesy Onishi Gallery, New York, NY

Opposite page, bottom:
Hannya Tamotsu
Leaf-Shape Tray, 2013
metal cast with fukiwake technique
4 x 21 1/2 x 9 1/4"
Photo courtesy Onishi Gallery, New York, NY

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exhibitions focusing on contemporary Japanese craft, most notably at the Victoria and Albert Museum and British Museum in London; the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Copenhagen; and the Galleria Palatina di Palazzo Pitti, Firenze.

Kōgei is the term applied to a specific category of objects known as "Art Crafts" in Japan, implying advanced technical skill and a refined design sensibility, as applied to utilitarian items. Ōsumi is a prime example of a *kōgei* artist, whose work looks both forward and back, to propagate and build upon vernacular Japanese craft practices. She mirrors Japan's post-WWII cultural agenda, to embrace modernization through the lens of its glorious past, thereby reinvigorating it with a new paradigm. Few cultures esteem studio crafts as much as the Japanese, who place disciplines such as ceramics, textiles, lacquer, and metalwork on equal footing with painting and sculpture. Japan's Living National Treasure program was founded in 1955 as a way to reward and support "Important Intangible Cultural Properties" such as drama, music, dance, and applied arts that are deemed to possess momentous historical or artistic value. The independent Japan Art Crafts Association (*Nihon Kōgei Kai*), in concert with the government's Agency for Cultural Affairs (*Bunkachō*), Japan Broadcasting Association (NHK), and Asahi Newspaper Company, currently sponsors the annual Japanese Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition.

Ōsumi believes that tradition can't survive by constant repetition of habitual ways of thinking and working; one must instead absorb these modes within oneself and then find new channels to give "form and permanence to tradition," to actually develop fresh approaches, as a means of preserving the past. German art historian Alexander Dorner (1893–1957) could have been addressing Ōsumi when, in writing about artist Herbert Bayer, he stated: "In order to understand the present we must link it to the self-transforming urges of the past. We must see it as a...gradual process of growth in which several earlier currents have penetrated one another..."[1] Ōsumi endeavors to make time stand still, by her investment in the venerated methods practiced by generations of Japanese craftsmen, thus eliminating issues related to temporal relevance; in so doing, she renders her work timeless.

Just as in the late 19th century, Japanese metalworking is presently divided into three separate disciplines: *chūkin* (casting); *tankin* (hammering); and *chōkin* (chasing). Each smith is categorized within one skill set. Ōsumi is a 1969 graduate of Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, where she studied art history but was drawn to learning metalwork with Moriyuki Katsura, an expert in chasing and inlay. She experimented under Katsura with different colored and patinated segments of inlaid gold, copper, and silver that were then polished until perfectly flat, to create small, albeit richly patterned, objects. Both an incense burner and box aptly show Ōsumi's early interest in color, although she eventually wished to move on from this two-dimensional imagery—reminiscent of lacquerware—as well as limit her palette.

Ōsumi also became intent on making large hammered works, so she studied hammering with Sekiya Shirō (1907–1994; designated a Living National Treasure in 1977). Shiro's pieces, however, possess perfectly flat, smooth surfaces, and Ōsumi desired texture; to that end she pursued inlay with Kashima Ikkoku (1898–1996; designated a Living National Treasure in 1979), a metalsmith descended from a long line of specialists in *nunome zōgan* (inlay on cross-hatched ground, sometimes referred to as "textile imprint" or "weave pattern" inlay), a technique similar to damascene.[2] Ōsumi applies texture to the vessels' surface by incising a tridirectional meshlike grid as support for inlays of gold and lead wire or foil. She restricts the coloration by forming her vessels from silver, with pure gold and lead used for inlay, along with the bright, unpatinated linear areas that accrue naturally when silver and lead are placed in close proximity to one another during the patinating process. The silver vase, *High Tide Comes In* (2007), is a prime example of both her use of hammered texture and hatched ground under the inlay. A vase that sports a similar wave pattern won grand prize in the 34th Japanese Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition in 1984. A silver, gold, and lead vessel, *Kokuchō* (Black Tide), from 2000, is in the collection of the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh; a goose-necked vase, *Heat Haze* (1992), resides at London's Victoria and Albert Museum. Eventually wishing a more dynamic opening than that which could be achieved with circular

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Strait, 2013
silver with nunome zōgan in lead and gold
9 3/4 x 14 1/4 x 12"
Photos courtesy Onishi Gallery, New York, NY

Process is the driving force behind Ōsumi's practice.

plate, Ōsumi began using four-, five-, or six-cornered sheets of silver that she hammered into handkerchief-like shapes, simultaneously allowing for a more complete view of the vessels' interior.

Process is the driving force behind Ōsumi's practice. She initially forms her vessels within an oak support, by alternately annealing and beating three-millimeter-thick silver sheet with a two percent copper content that has been selected for color and pliability. Her initial hammer—shaped like a taro root—is also oak, as is the tree stump that holds her tools. Once the vase shape has been raised, by alternating between wood and iron hammers of varying sizes and shapes, Ōsumi chases lines that form bulges in the silver. She then paints the inlay motifs with brush and ink, which enables her to erase and repaint the design until perfect. The ink is removed as she incises the meshlike grid, composed of closely spaced vertical, horizontal, and diagonal hatchings—employing variously sized, hand-carved chisels—which result in the clothlike texture that gives this inlay technique its name. Any remaining ink residue is then wiped away. Ōsumi inlays the grooves with twenty-micron gold foil, adding a cross current of lead inlay that she rubs with charcoal to alter the grey color, until the intended shadow and nuance are achieved. She then finishes the pieces by treating these areas with a black patina that she selectively removes, to adjust gradations from dark to light. A single piece can take up to four months to complete.

Ōsumi's most recent vessels depart from those that preceded them. In figuration, they are boat-shaped; in technique they are compressed, rather than stretched, and composed of silver two millimeters in thickness, instead of three. Some examples are freestanding, while others hang from handmade chains. "Planks," recalling the hull of a ship, are hammered onto the metal's surface, which is later chiseled with abstract images of windswept waves perceived through mist. As with the earlier vases, she continues to use hatched pattern inlays of gold and lead foil for the surface as in *Kaikyo* (Strait) from 2013, and *Tokai* (Crossing the Sea), 2015.

In 2015 Ōsumi Yukie was the first artist to be awarded a Residency in Japanese Metalwork Design at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (the Smithsonian Institution's museums of Asian art in Washington, D.C.). She led a workshop in *nunome zōgan* at the Baltimore Jewelry Center, in which she customized chisels for the participants, as she often does for herself, to produce the desired effects. Last fall, the Freer|Sackler showcased three exquisite vessels in a small exhibition, "Ōsumi Yukie: Wind and Waves." Each of the pieces: *Sound of Wind* (2014)[3]; *Huge Waves/Thunderous Shouts* (2012)[4]; and *Wave Crests* (2008)[5] evokes the spirit of rolling waves as seen through the filter of wind, clouds, and mist.[6]

Ōsumi lives and works in Tokyo, although in 1988 she completed a year of study in the United Kingdom, under the sponsorship of Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs. In addition to the Victoria and Albert Museum and National Museum of Scotland, her work is in the collections of the National Museum of Modern Art and Agency for Cultural Affairs in Tokyo; and MOA Museum of Art, Atami, Japan. Ōsumi Yukie's life epitomizes the state of grace that may be found through a solitary studio practice, common to both eastern and western craft activity. Lee Nordness, a mid-20th-century New York gallerist who specialized in contemporary American crafts, wrote of the post-WWII American craftsman: "...Because he would create his object from start to finish with his own hands he could hope to integrate the meaning of his labor with the dictates of

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1
Underwater Dragon, 2009
hammered silver with nunome zōgan in lead and gold
10 x 10"
Photos courtesy Onishi Gallery, New York, NY

2
Wave Crests, 2008
hammered silver with nunome zōgan in lead and gold
10 13/16 x 11 7/8"

3
Huge Waves/Thunderous Shouts, 2012
silver with nunome zōgan in lead and gold
9 1/8 x 11 7/8 x 8 7/8"

4
Sound of Wind, 2014
silver with nonume zōgan in lead and gold
11 x 12"

Photos courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

1

2

3

4

his spirit... For the creative person seeking spiritual harmony, working by hand in craft media was an answer."[7] Ōsumi Yukie strives to enrich tradition by harnessing a strategy that balances past and present, mind and matter, skill and soul—fostering an enduring legacy. ◆

Toni Greenbaum, an art historian specializing in 20th- and 21st-century jewelry and metalwork, teaches at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York.

The author wishes to thank Nana Onishi of Onishi Gallery and Louise Cort, Curator of Ceramics at the Freer|Sackler, for their invaluable help in preparing this article.

1. Alexander Dorner, *The Way Beyond "Art": The Work of Herbert Bayer* (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, 1947), 16. / **2.** *Nunome zōgan* is often translated into English as "textile imprint" or "weave pattern" inlay; *nunome* means "textile pattern"—the "eyes of the cloth"—representing the intersection of warp and weft threads, while *zōgan* means "inlay." Nonetheless, it is important to note that no actual fabric is used in the inlay process. / **3.** *Sound of Wind* won the Nihon Kōgeikai Hojisha prize (awarded for outstanding work selected by members of the Japanese Traditional Art Crafts Association who are Living National Treasures) at the 61st annual Japanese Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition that opened in Tokyo September 17, 2014, and traveled to major cities in Japan. / **4.** *Huge Waves/ Thunderous Shouts* was included in the 59th annual Japanese Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition in 2012. / **5.** *Wave Crests* received the MOA Museum of Art Prize in the 2010 Okada Mokichi Award invitational exhibition held at the MOA Museum of Art, Atami, Japan. / **6.** The Freer|Sackler website will soon contain a section about Ōsumi Yukie that will include videos of her working processes, a talk by her given at the Freer|Sackler, an edited interview, images of the exhibited works and a description of the artist-in-residency. / **7.** Lee Nordness, *Objects: USA* (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), 11.

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Ballast, Kerianne Quick

Velvet da Vinci,
San Francisco,
California
11.4.16 – 11.20.16

by Anton Stuebner

Transmutations 4 (brooch), 2016, foraged brick, inherited glass beads, silk, sterling silver, stainless steel, 3 1/2 x 3 x 3/8"

Genealogies haunt Kerianne Quick's work. Composed from discarded bricks combined with pearls inherited from a relative, her sculptural assemblages ostensibly function as necklaces and earrings but are weighed down by a deliberate heaviness. For Quick, objects are always endowed with deeper historical burdens. The works included in "Ballast," Quick's solo exhibition at Velvet da Vinci, raise critical questions about the detrimental effects of early American industrialization. In her compelling artist statement, Quick suggests that the found bricks used throughout the show—all culled from the Hudson River Valley—serve as a conceptual point of entry for considering the dislocation of Algonquin-speaking tribes by European settlers and the depletion of natural resources through manufacturing. In choosing to exhibit these sculptural works as jewelry, Quick also invites us to consider the real costs of our continued cultural fascination with adornment.

Transmutations 8 (necklace), 2016, foraged brick, inherited glass beads, silk, sterling silver clasp from an inherited necklace length 16"

"Ballast" features work from "Transmutations," a series that responds to the complicated histories of manufacturing in the Hudson River Valley. In the late 17th century, European settlers began producing bricks in upstate New York from rich clay deposits found along the riverbank, forcing out indigenous populations as industry grew. By the mid-19th century, brick manufacturing boomed after mass fires leveled New York City's largely wood-frame buildings. Nearly 42 brickyards produced as many as a million bricks a year, establishing an industry while inaugurating New York City into a new era of urbanism. The clay deposits inevitably dried up, leading to the collapse of business and, in 2002, the close of the Hudson River Valley's last brickyard.

The tensions embedded in these histories—between the industrial and the agrarian, between urban growth and exhaustible resources—inform Quick's description of her process. To create the work for "Transmutations," Quick "foraged" for defective and misfired bricks scrapped by manufacturers along the banks of the Hudson River. She then carved them into smoothed shapes resembling beads or pendants, combining them with "inherited" pearls and glass beads repurposed from jewelry passed through her family. Some of the finished works present a near seamless complement of elements. The juxtaposition between natural and manmade materials in *Transmutations 8*, for instance,

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feels strangely organic, the brick pieces carved and tumbled to approximate the scale and texture of the pearls into a single elegant necklace strand. In other pieces, though, the combinations are more disquieting, such as in *Transmutations 4*, where the tentacle-like strands of pearls seem to menacingly protrude from a smooth brick brooch. Traces of mass production and manufacturing are nearly absent, but some works, such as the necklace *Transmutations 29*, serve as artifacts of a now-defunct industry, the initials JMG stamped into segmented brick pendants strung with a luminous half-strand of pearls.

Quick's work suggests greater possibilities for historical inquiry through creative intervention, which makes it a shame, then, that it never seems to quite live up to that promise. Her exhibition suffers in part from a lack of variation: her use of materials is ingenious, but once you understand the concept, there's not enough to substantially distinguish one piece from the next, either in terms of composition or scale. More troubling is the exhibition's "centerpiece," a canoe suspended from the gallery's ceiling in which many of Quick's works are displayed. Though presented as a nod to the Hudson River's history as a site of commerce and trade, it's a distraction, an oddity that ultimately deters the viewer from more thoughtful engagement. Then there's the lingering question about the "inherited" pearls, which seem to have a compelling genealogy whose origins are never explained. But even if "Ballast" does not fully succeed in its ambitions, Quick's attempt to investigate complex social histories through its material effects remains an exciting project worth continued pursuit.

Anton Stuebner is a San Francisco–based arts writer.

In/Animate: Recent Work by Myra Mimlitsch-Gray

Sara Bedrick Gallery
Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, State University of New York at New Paltz
8.31.16 – 12.11.16

by Andrea DiNoto

Disney animators can make a teapot dance using nothing more than pen and ink. But when the aim is to bring actual household items to life, that is, to "animate"—as this show's title implies—such static things as cookware, pitchers, platters, and trays with meaning, the task must fall to an artist adept with more imposing tools and visions. In this presentation of her work of the past decade, renowned metalsmith Myra Mimlitsch-Gray shows us how it is done, displaying meticulous craftsmanship in the rendition of often surreal imagery. Among the more dramatically enlivened objects are pans from a 2007 series of deformed cast-iron cookware: *Freestanding Skillet* presents a massive pan set on edge and morphing into a ghostly form; *Brat Pans* offers a macabre wall-hung chorus line of a dozen smaller pans with distorted, sausage-like bodies; and corn pone pans, including *Mitosis I and II*, have been re-cast so that the multiple corn impressions cluster and overlap to suggest the cellular distortions of genetic modification. In "Domestic Disruptions," her

Freestanding Skillet, 2007, cast ductile iron, 13 × 23 × 2"

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Torn Pita, 2012, copper, brass
1 3/4 × 5 3/4 × 5"

incisive catalogue essay, curator Akiko Busch points out that "changeability has always been central to the work of Mimlitsch-Gray," whose "material transfigurations are both raw and refined." This dichotomy becomes apparent when contrasting the rough menace and materiality of the cast-iron pieces with more subtly transgressive items rendered in silver, copper, and brass. *Pair of Cups* (2005) reprises Mimlitsch-Gray's iconic melting silverware trope, in which a gleaming luxury object (like a candelabra) appears to puddle on its way to extinction, an apt metaphor not only for impermanence, but for the mind in meltdown as it attempts to rationalize the irrational. Similarly, the handles of the copper *Strappy Vessel* (2011), seem to be metastasizing into an arterial tangle of ribbons, rendering it unfit for common use. *Clove Oval* (2010), an ambiguous container-like form, is equipped with both a slash mouth and impertinent tongue that taunts with a provocative silence. The copper and brass *Torn Pita* (2012)—misnamed, as it is smoothly cleft, not torn—is inescapably sexual, an object expressive of consumption and desire. Apropos of these images, Daniel Belasco, the Dorsky's Curator of Exhibitions and Programs, writes in the catalogue that with such works Mimlitsch-Gray is "reinventing the Surrealist object for the 21st century, provoking unexpected sensations and emotional associations to become portals to the unconscious." This view—indisputable, I would venture—can find application as well in "Witness," some of the artist's current explorations using porcelain enamel over steel. *Grey White Swirly* (2014), borrows its sensual, softly pneumatic hot-water bottle shape from the earlier silver piece, *Something for the Table* (2013); but while the latter invites touch, with its gleaming surface and gentle contours, *Swirly* with artfully streaked and crackled enamel skin, seems more like a once-lovely artifact in a state of inevitable decomposition.

Mimlitsch-Gray states in the catalogue: "My work exists as homage and critique as it engages traditional objects, their purpose and presence in contemporary society." The works on view embody the ways in which craft practice now seeks meaning beyond utility, discomfort beyond complacency, transcendence beyond the mundane. Aptly titled, *In/Animate* expresses the essential paradox inherent in these immutable metal objects, into which Mimlitsch-Gray has breathed the potential for mutability, as if to say "This is not what it is."

Andrea DiNoto is a New York–based writer on art, craft, and design.

Evert Nijland: Between Black and White

Gallery Loupe, Montclair, New Jersey
10.15.16 – 11.5.16

by Ursula Ilse-Neuman

Gallery Loupe presented a welcome opportunity to view recent work by the Dutch jewelry artist Evert Nijland. Fifteen works were displayed at tabletop height, which allowed close-up scrutiny of his brooches, necklaces, chokers, and cuffs.

The exhibition's title, "Between Black and White," refers to two extremes: black, an absence of color, and white, the blend of all colors. Indeed, these opposites may well be understood as a metaphor for the evolution of Dutch jewelry over the last 60 years, from the ultra-minimalism of the 1960s and '70s, with its shunning of precious metals and gemstones and any suggestion of ornament or narrative content, to the pluralism and unlimited artistic freedom in which Nijland thrives today.

Central to Nijland's work is his interpretation of motifs from art historical periods, notably the baroque, and expressed through a bold multimedia approach incorporating cast silver, porcelain, textiles, leather, recycled wood, and the medium he exploits to the fullest: lamp-blown glass. When Nijland began his studies at the Rietveld Academy in the early 1990s, such direct references, unabashed celebrations of

Shine, 2015, porcelain, iron beads, textile, dimens

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Medusa (cuff), 2016, laser-cut leather, hand-blown glass, diameter 4 1/2"

ornament, and comingling of diverse work processes broke new and fertile ground.

Nijland's juxtaposition of opposites in materials as well as techniques is frequently jarring. In *Medusa*, for example, a hefty black laser-cut leather cuff becomes precariously fragile through the addition of delicately blown glass curlicues, while in *Purple*, the S&M qualities of a constricting dark leather choker are mitigated by delicate lamp-blown glass segments. Nijland explains that these embellishments are inspired by small 16th-century Dutch "ringel cups," decorative metal rings that served as manual doorknockers. This fascination with glass in combination with other media also manifests itself in brooches in which cast silver twigs serve as armatures for tiny lamp-blown glass trumpets or irregularly shaped nodules.

In *Snake*, Nijland employs the centuries-old technique of substituting glass for precious stones by applying miniscule glass droplets to the snake's patinated silver skin. Trumpet shapes resembling cornucopia appear on two other necklaces: *Trumpets*, made of silver and glass, and an untitled piece made in white porcelain, a material with a long and important history in Dutch culture, that the artist has embellished with rococo-inspired scrollwork and green silk ribbons.

Many of Nijland's works require technical expertise that can only be executed with the participation of skilled specialists such as lampworkers, silver casters, wood carvers, and ceramic and textile experts. This outsourcing approach is also employed by a small number of other contemporary jewelers and is common practice with several well-known contemporary painters and sculptors who enlist assistants while maintaining sole authorship of their pieces.

In addition to the jewelry that Nijland recently made for the show, a number of highly reflective, mirrored glass brooches that the artist created a decade ago are noteworthy. While these brooches appear at first glance to be minimalist antidotes to the opulence elsewhere on display, the artist explains that 16th-century Venetian glass and the glittering waters surrounding Venice were the inspiration for their extraordinary reflective surfaces. Conceived as wall installations, these brooches were attached to enlarged Piranesi prints of antique ruins, creating an enchanting play with jewelry and glass, space and time.

The final surprise was a 21st-century rococo flight of fancy in the form of a fragmented, hollowed-out porcelain putto. Measuring no more than ten inches in height, the figurine recalls 18th-century tabletop decorations, but Nijland places this archetypal sculpture in another universe by embroidering it with antique iron beads and hair-like silk threads. To Nijland, the object represents a combination of past and present, form and emptiness that suggests the ravages of time and draws an intriguing parallel to the Roman ruins in the Piranesi prints on the walls. While the figurine is not wearable, it embodies many of the qualities that Nijland wants us to appreciate in his jewelry: his celebration of opulent ornament, his elegant reveling in sensuality and eroticism, and his unique ability to interpret the beauty of ages past through his utterly contemporary eyes.

Ursula Ilse-Neuman is Curator Emerita at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York.

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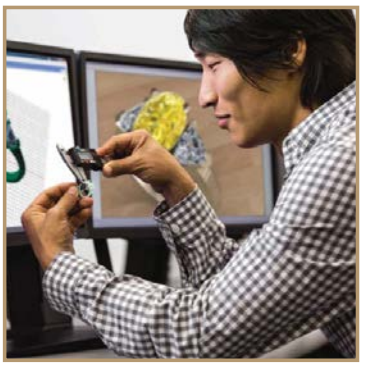

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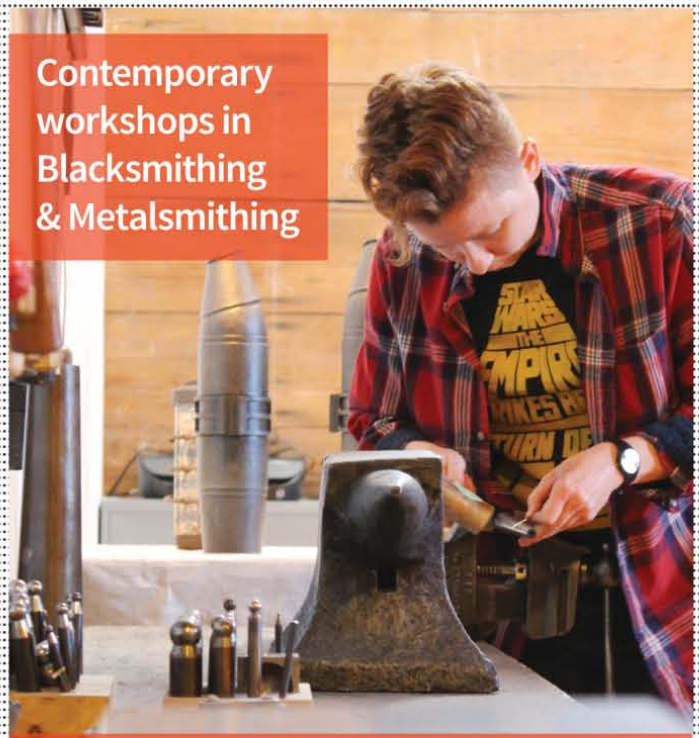

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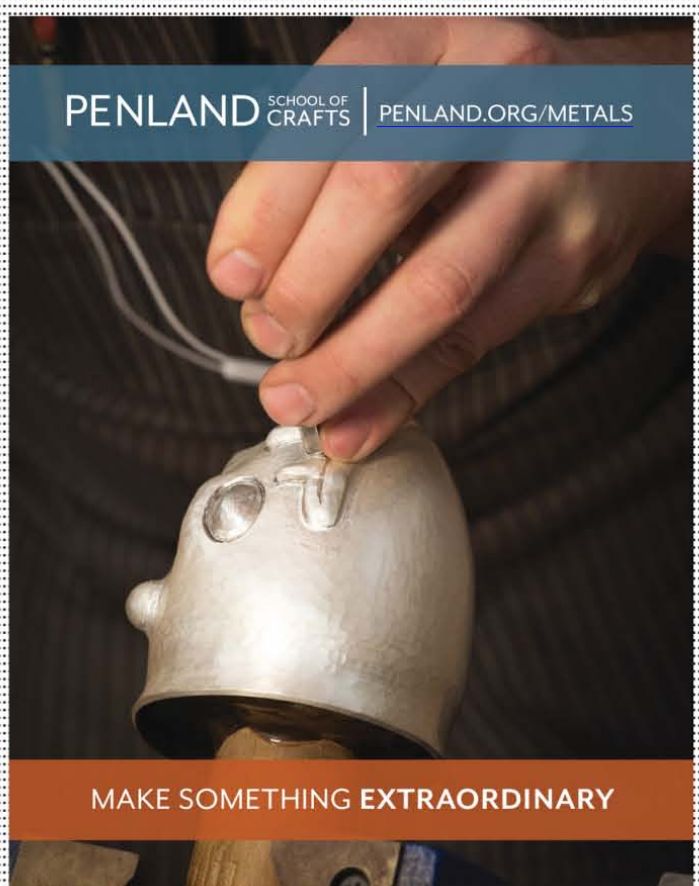

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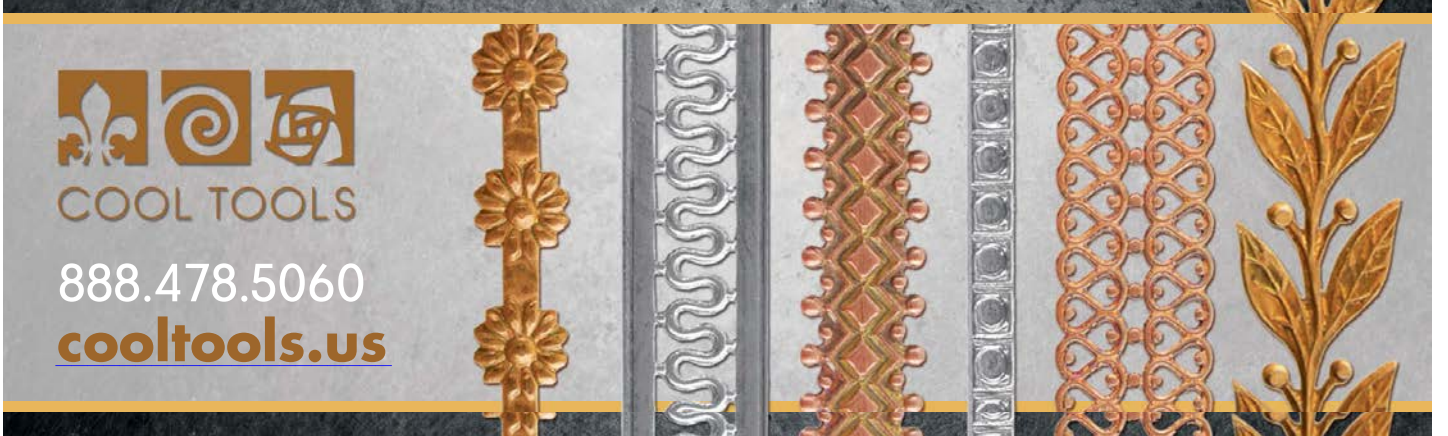

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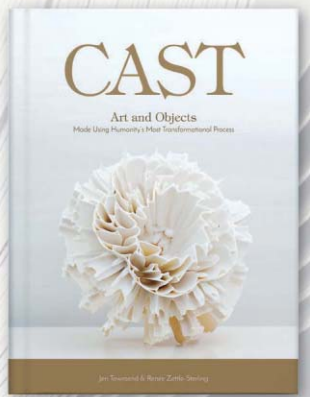

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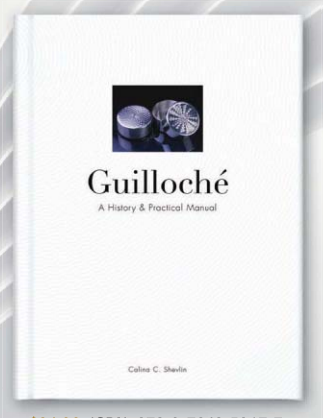

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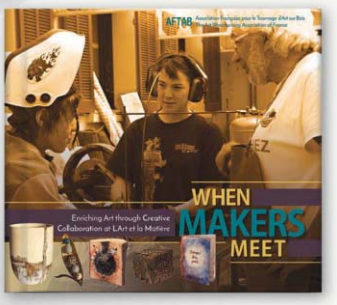

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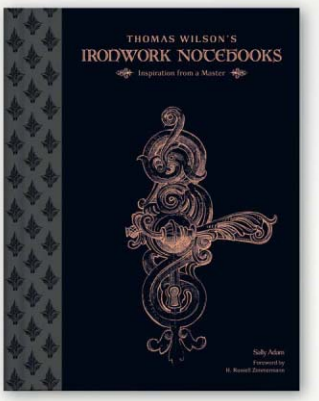

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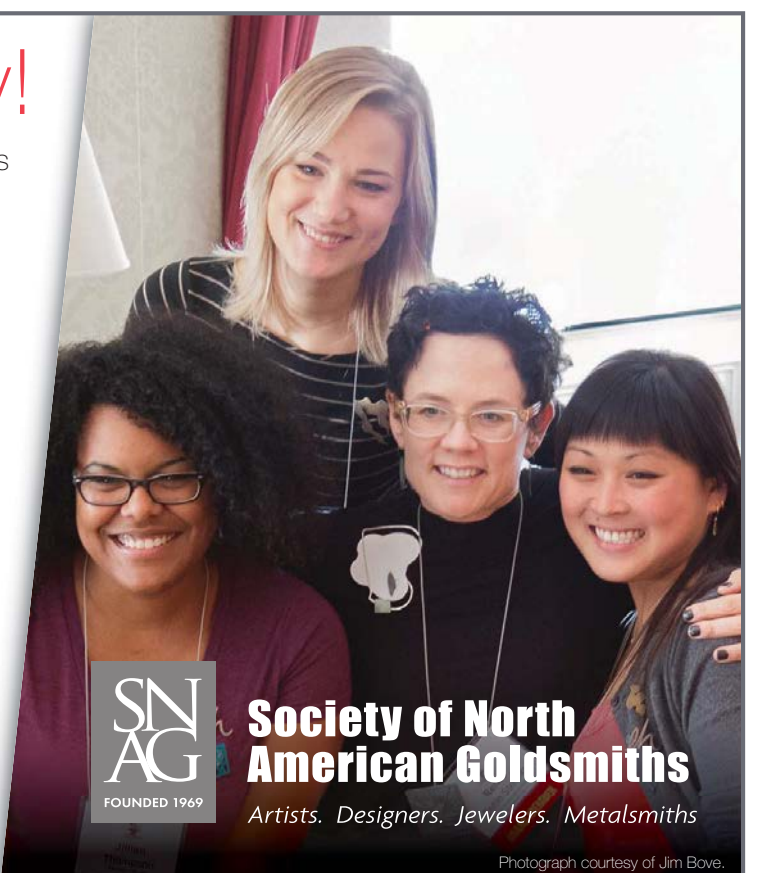

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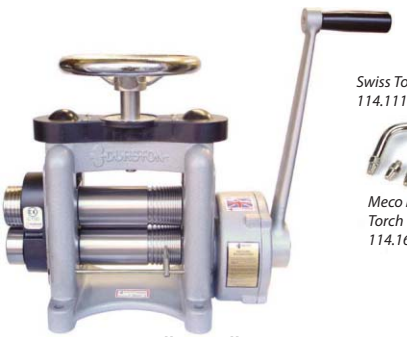

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